

Christ, the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.

O R, A
Short Discourse.

Pointing forth the way of making
use of Christ for justification, and especially
and more particularly, for *Sanctification*
in all its parts, from

J O H A N. XIV: VerL VI.

*Wherein several cases of conscience are briefly an-
swered, chiefly touching Sanctification.*

By

J O H N B R O W N.

Preacher of the Gospel.



R O T T E R D A M.

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THE
EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO
The Right Honorable and Religious Lady,

Lady STRATHNAVER

Thus Christ himself being
 the chiefe corner stone
 in whom all the building
 isly framed together
 groweth up an holy tem-
 ple in the Lord as it ought
 to be the principal con-
 crement of all, who have
 not been down on this side of Jordan, to satisfy
 their souls, (once erected for, and in their owne
 nature requiring, in order to their owne
 ritual, immortal and heavenly substance)
 with husks prepared for beasts, to be fed in
 and upon this carnal food, for no satisfaction of
 God, through the Spirit: so it ought to be the
 maine desire and work of such, as would be
 approver of Gods truest labours and co-
 workers with God, to be following the ex-



1641
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THE
EPISTLE DEDICATORY
TO

The Right Honourable and Religious Lady,

The

Lady STRATHNAVER.

IN A DEDICATION.



Jesus Christ himself being the cheite corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; as it ought to be the principal cornerstone of all, who have not sitten down on this side of *Jordan*, to satisfy their souls, (once created for, and in their owne nature requiring, in order to satisfaction, spiritual, immortal and incorruptible substance), with husks prepared for beasts, to be built in and upon this corner stone, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit: So it ought to be the maine designe and work of such, as would be approven of God, as faithful labourers and co-workers with God, to be following the example of him, who determined not to know

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any thing, among thole he wrote unto, save
Iesus Christ and him crucified. O! this noble,
heart-ravishing, soul-satisfying mysterious
theme, *Iesus Christ crucified*, the short compend
of that uncontrovertibly great mysterie of god-
liness, God manifest in the flesh, justified in
the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the
Gentiles, beleeyed op in the world, received
up into glory: wherem are things the Angels
desire to look into, or with vehement desire
bend (as it were) their necks, and bow down
their heads to look and peep into (as the word
used, 1 Pet. 1: 12. importeth) is a Subject for
angelical heads to prie into; for the most inde-
fatigable, & industrious Spirits, to be occupied
about. The searching into and studying of this
one *Truib*, in reference to a closeing with it,
as our life, is an infallible mark of a soul di-
vinely enlightened, and endued with spiritual
and heavenly wisdom; for though it be unto
the jewes a stumbling block, & unto the Greeks
foolishness; yet unto them, who are called, it is
Christ the power of God, & the wisdom of God,
because the foolishness of God is wiler then
men, & the weakness of God is stronger then
men. O! what depths of the manifold wisdom
of God are there in this mysterie. The more it is
preached, known & beleeyed aright, the more is
it understood, to be beyond understanding, & to
be what it is, a mysterie. Did ever any Preacher
or beleever, get a broad look of this boundless
ocean, wherein infinite *Wisdom*, *Love* that
passeth

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passeth all understanding. Grace without all dimensions, justice that is admirable and tremendous, and God in his glorious Properties, Condescensions, high and noble Designs, and in all his Perfections and Vertues, flow over all banks, or were they ever admitted to a prospect hereof in the face of Iesus Christ; & were not made to cry out, O the depth and height, the breadth and length! O the inconceivable, and incomprehensible, boundlessness of all infinitely transcendent perfections! Did ever any with serious diligence, as knowing their life lay in it, study this mysterious Theme, and were not in full conviction of soul, made to say, the more they promoted in this study, and the more they descended in their diveings into this depth, or soared upward in their mounting speculations in this height, they found it the more an unsearchable mystery? The study of other Themes (which Alas! many, who think it below them to be happy, are too much occupied in) when it hath wasted the spirits, wearyed the minde, worn the body, and rarified the braine to the next degree unto a distraction, what satisfaction can it give, as to what is attained, or encouragement as to future attainments? And when, as to both these, something is had, and the poor soul puffed up with an airy and fanciful apprehension of having obtained some great thing, but in truth a great Nothing, or a Nothing pregnant with Vanity, and vexation of Spirit, foolish twines causing no gladness to the

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Father, for he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Eccles. 1. 18. What peace can all
 yeeld to a soul reflecting on passing away times,
 now near the last point, and looking forward
 to endless Eternity? Oh! the thoughts of time
 wasted with, and faire opportunities of good
 lost by, the vehement pursuing and hunting
 after shadowes and vanities, will torment the
 soul; by assaulcing it with piercing convictions
 of madness and folly, in forsaking *All*, to over-
 take *Nothing*; with dreadful and soul rentify-
 ing discoveries of the saddest of disappoint-
 ments; and with the horror of an everlasting
 irrecoverable losse; And what hath the labo-
 rious Spirit thus reaped of all the travail of his
 soul, when he hath lost it? But, on the other
 hand, O with what calmness of minde, serenity
 of soul and peace of conscience, because of the
 peace of God, which passeth all understanding,
 will that poor soul look back; when standing
 on the border of Eternity, on the bygone days
 or hours it spent, in seeking after, praying for,
 seeking all appointed means for, some saving
 acquaintance with, and interest in this only soul
 up making, and soul satisfying *Myster*; and
 upon its yeelding up it self, through the mer-
 ciful operations of the Spirit of grace, wholly
 without disputing, unto the powerful workings
 of this *mystery* within; and in becoming dis-
 ciples with Christ, and living through, crucified
 Christ, living in it, by his Spirit and power;
 and with what rejoycing of heart and glorifying

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singing of soul, will it look for ward to Eternity,
and its everlasting abode in the prepared mansi-
ons; remembering that there, its begun hapi-
ness will be everlastingly continued, its capacity to
understand that unsearchable mystery will be
inconceivably greater; and the spiritual, hea-
venly and glorious joy, which it will have in
that practical leading, its divinity without book
of ordinances, will be its life and felicity for
ever. And what peace & joy in the holy Ghost,
what inward and inexpressible quiet and con-
tentment of minde, will the soul enjoy, in dwell-
ing on these thoughts, when it shall have within
the inward and well grounded persuasion of
its right, through Jesus Christ, to the full
possession of that All, which now it cannot
conceive, let be comprehend; the foretastes
whereof filleth it with joy unspeakable and full
of glory; and the hope of shortly landing there,
where it shall see and enjoy & wonder & praise,
and rest in this, endless and restless felicitating
work, making it to sing, while passing thorow
the valley of the shadow of death? O that
were believed! O that we were not drunk, to
glorification and madness, with the adulterous
love of vaine and aery speculations, to the
postponing, if not utter neglecting, of this
maine and only upmaking work, of getting real
acquaintance with and a begun possession of this
treasure in our souls, Christ, the grand mystery,
formed within us, living, and working within
us by his Spirit, and working us up unto a con-

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formity unto, and an heart-cloſing with God
manifested in the flesh, that we may haue, in ex-
perience, or at least, in truth and reality, haue a
true transumpt of that Gospel mystery, in our
souls! Oh when shall we take pleasure in pur-
sueing after this happinels, that will not flee
from us, but is rather pursueing us; when shall
we receive with joy and triumph this King of
glory, that is courting us dayly, and is seeking
accesse and entry into our souls? Oh why cry
we not out, in the height of the passion of spiri-
tual longing & desire, O come Lord Jesus, King
of glory, with thine owne key, and open the door and
enlarge & dilate the chambers of the soul, that thou
may enter, and be entertained as the King of glory,
with all thy glorious retinue, to the ennobling of my
soul, & satisfying of all the desires of that immortal
spark. Why do we not covet after this know-
ledge, which hath a true and firme connexion
with all the best and truely divine gifts? O happy
soul, that is wasted and worne to a shadow (if
that could be) in this study and exercise, which
at length will enliven and (as it were) bring
in a new heavenly & spiritual soul into the soul,
so that it shall look no more like a dead, dispi-
rited thing, out of its native soile and element;
but as a free, elevated and spiritualized Spirit,
expatiating it self, & fleeing abroad in the open
aire of its owne element and country. O happy
day, O happy houre, that is really and effe-
ctually spent in this imployment! what would
souls, sweeming in this ocean of all pleasures
and

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and delights, care for, yea, with what abhor-
rency would they look upon the bewitching
allurements of this purest kinde of carnal de-
lights, which flow from the mindes satisfac-
tion in feeding on the poor apprehensions, &
groundlesly expected comprehensions of ob-
jects, suited to its natural genius and capacity?
O! what a more hyperbolically exceeding and
glorious satisfaction hath a soul, in its very pur-
sueings after (when it misseth & cannot reach)
that which is truly desireable! How doth the
least glimpse, through the smallest cranie, of
this glorious and glorifying knowledge of God
in Christ, apprehended by faith, raise up the
soul to that pitch of joy and satisfaction, which
the knowledge of natural things, in its purest
perfection, shall never be able to cause; and to
what a surmounting measure of this joy and
contentation, will the experienceing & feeling
by spiritual sense the sweet and spiritual relish
of this captivating, and transcendently excellent
knowledge, raise the soul unto? O! must not
this be the very suburbs of heaven to the soul?
When the soul thus seeth & apprehendeth God
in Christ, and that as its owne God, through
Christ; for as all saving knowledge, draweth out
the soul unto an embracing & closing with the
object, so it bringeth in the object to the making
up of the reciprocal union and in-being, it can-
not but admire with exultation, and exult with
admiration, at that condescendence of free
grace, that hath made it in any measure capable

The Epistle

of this hegety glory, as doth will further, milder
 incept by his begyn glory, to be a partaker of
 the substance of the Saints in light, and never
 with a soule that hath tasted of the pure delight
 of this river of gospel manifestation, & hath
 seen with soule ravishing delight in some one
 face in the shewfold will long of God wrapped
 up therein, and the complete and perfect sym-
 metrie of all the parts of his noble countenance,
 and also the pure desigoe of the countenance
 of a Man, and to extoll the riches of the free
 grace of God, that the sinner when possessed of
 all, is designed for him and effectuated in him
 thereby, may know who those should weare
 the crown and have all the glory, what I say,
 will soon as not see in another gospel in so many
 led to the meridian of the natural, crooked and
 corrupted temper of proud man, who is sold
 made vaine of nothing, which instead of bring-
 ing a sinner, fallen too in God through pride,
 back againe to the joyment of Him, through
 a Mediator, doth but foster that inare plagues
 and rebellion, which caused and procured his
 first excommunication from the favour, and
 banishment out of the paradise of God, that
 shall attract his heart to it, and move it to a
 compliaunce with it. When the poor sinner,
 that hath bin made to pant after a Saviour, and
 hath bin purged to the very ports of the city of
 refuge by the avenger of blood, the justice of
 God, hath tasted and seen, how good God is,
 and felt the sweetness of free love in a crucified
 Christ,

Deceitfull.

Christ, and see the beauty and glory in this
mystery of free grace of freely answering and
overcoming the mystery of iniquity and misery.
O what a complacency hath he therein, and in
the way of gospel salvation, wherein free grace
is seen to overflow all banks, to the eternal praise
of the God of all grace. How false and un-
favourable will the most cunningly devised and
patch together mode of salvation be, that men,
studying the perversion of the gospel, and seek-
ing the ruin of souls, with all their skill, in-
dustry and learning, are setting off with forced
rhetoricks, and the artifice of words, for
man's wisdom, and with the plausible advan-
tages of a pretended liberty, and of strong
grounds and motives unto diligence and pain-
labours, to a very denying and renouncing of
Christian liberty, when once it is observed,
how it doth encheate upon, and darkeneth the
senses, by diminishing the glory of free grace,
and hath the least tendency to the setting of the
crowning on the creature's head, in whole or in
part. The clearest perception that hereby the
linners song, ascribing blessing, honour, glory
and power, unto him, that was slain, & hath
redeemed them to God by his blood, out of
every kindred and tongue and people and nation,
and hath made them unto their God kings and
priests, shall be marred, will be enough to
render that device detestable, and convince the
soul, that it is not the gospel of the grace of
God, nor that mystery of God and of Christ,
but

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but rather the myſtery of iniquity. What a
peculiar favouritels doth the humbled beleever
finde, in the doctrine of the true goſpel grace;
and the more, that he be thereby made *Nothing*;
and Chriſt made *All*; that he, in his higheſt
attainments, be debaiſed, and Chriſt exalted; that
his moſt lovely peacocke feathers be laid; & the
crown flouriſh on Chriſt's head; that he be laid
flat, without one foot to ſtand upon; and
Chriſt the only ſupporter, and carryer of him
to glory; that he be as dead without life, and
Chriſt live in him, the more lovely, the more
beautiful, the more deſireable, and acceptable
is it unto him. O what a complacency hath
the graced ſoul, in that contrivance of infinite
wiſdom, wherein the myſtery of the grace of
God is ſo diſplayed, that nothing appeareth,
from the loweſt foundation ſtone to the upper,
moſt cope-ſtone but grace, grace, free grace
making up all the materials, and free grace with
infinite wiſdom cementing all. The gracious
ſoul can be warme under no other covering,
but what is made of that web, wherein grace
and only grace is both woof and werpe; and the
reaſon is manifeſt, for ſuch an one hath the
cleareſt ſight and diſcovery of his owne condi-
tion, and ſeech that nothing ſuiteth him, and
his caſe, but free grace: nothing can make up
his wants, but free grace: nothing can cover
his deformities, but free grace; nothing can
help his weakneſſes, ſhortcomings, faintings,
ſins and miſcarriages, but free grace; therefore
is

Dedictory.

is free grace all his Salvation, and all his Desire:
it is his glory to be free grace's debtor, for ever-
more: the crown of glory will have a far more
exceeding and eternal weight, and be of an
hyperbolically hyperbolick and eternal weight,
and yet easily carryed and worne, when he
seeth how free grace and free love hath lined it,
and free grace and free love sets it on, and keeps
it on for ever: this maketh the glorified Saint
wear it with ease, by casting it down at the
feet of the gracious and loving purchaser, and
bestower. His exaltation is the Saints glory;
and by free grace, the Saints receiving and
holding all of free grace, is He exalted. O
what a glory is it to the Saint, to set the crown
of glorious free grace, with his owne hands,
on the head of such a Saviour, and to say, *Not
unto me, not unto me, but unto thee, even unto
thee alone, be the glory for ever and ever!* With
what delight, satisfaction, and complacency,
saith the glorified Saint, upon this account,
sing the Redeemed and Ransomed their song.
And if the result and effect of free grace will
give such a sweet sound there, and make the
glorified's heaven, in some respects, another
thing, or at least, in some respect, a more
excellēt heaven, than *Adam's* heaven would
have been; for *Adam* could not have sung the
song of the Redeemed; *Adam's* heaven would
not have been the purchase of the blood of God;
nor would *Adam* have sitted with Christ Re-
deemer on his throne; nor would there have
been

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been in his heaven such rich hangings of free
 gospel, in such minations prepared by the gra-
 cious and loving husband, our Christ, who will
 come and bring his bought-bride home with
 Him as being, I say, heaven, even upon the
 account of free grace, will have such a special
 lovely, desirable, and glorious lustre. O how
 should Grace be prized by us now? How
 should the Gospel of the Grace of God be esteem-
 ed by us? What an antipathy to Glory, as now
 prepared and dressed up for sinful man, must
 they show, whose whole wit and parts are
 busied to darken the glory of that Grace, which
 God would have shining in the Gospel; and
 who are at so much pains and labour, to dresse
 up another gospel (though the Apostle hath
 told us Gal. 1. 7. that there is not another)
 wherein Gospel, grace must stand by, and law
 grace take the throne, that so man may sa-
 crifice to his owne nec, and burn incense to his
 own drag, and may at most be graces debtor,
 in part; and yet no way may the sinner
 account himself more graces debtor, than
 the man was, who wilfully destroyed him-
 self, in not performing of the conditions;
 for Grace (as the new Gospellers, or rather
 Gospel-spillers mean, and say) did quitly
 to both frame the conditions, make k to waith
 contrivance, and render the conditions peace
 and salvation. But as to the difference betwixt
 Saul and Judas, it was Paul that made him-
 self to differ, and not the free grace of God, deter-
 mining the heart of Paul by grace to a close

Obligations

ing, and accepting of them again, it need
not grate this wrought within him, will soon
be wa-^{sh}ed, & not the grace of God in him.
What more contradictory to the gospel of the
grace of God? And yet vain Man will not con-
descend to the free grace of God. *Pelagianism*, *A-
ristotilianism*, need not put a man to much
study, and to the reading of many books, or
the ends it may be practically learned, though
the patrons hereof labour here in the very flesh,
to make their notions hang together, and to
give them such a lustre of unsanctified and cor-
rupt reason, as may be taking with such as
know no better conduct in the matters of God.
Strangely yet are all borne *Pelagians* and *A-
ristotilians*, these Tenets are deeply engraven in
the heart of every Son of fallen *Adam*, and the
serious servant of God findeth not this in his
dealing with souls, whom he is labouring to
bring into the way of the Gospel. Yes, what
Christ is there, who hath acquainted with
his own heart, and is observing its by-uses and
corrupt inclinations, that is not made to cry
out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deli-
ver me from these dregs of *Pelagianism*, *A-
ristotilianism* and *Iesuitism*, which I finde yet
within my soul? Hence it may seem no won-
derful, or strange thing (though as yet in much
clearlight, it may be astonishing to think, that
now in this age, so many are so openly, and
avowedly, appearing for this dangerous and
deadly error), to see to hear and see this in-
fection spreading and gaining ground so fast
there

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these needeth few arguments or motives. we
worken up carnal hearts to an embracing thereof,
of, and to a cheerful acquiescing therein; little
labour will make a spark of fire worke upon
gunpowder. And, methinks, if nothing else
will, this one thing should convince us all of
the error of this way; that nature so quickly
and readily complyeth therewith, for who,
that hath any eye upon, or regard of such things,
seeth not, what a world of carnal reasonings,
objections, prejudices, and scruples, natural
men have in readiness against the Gospel of
Christ, and with what satisfaction, peace and
delight, they reason and plead themselves out of
the very reach of free grace; and what work
there is to get a poor soul, in any measure wa-
kened and convinced of its lost condition,
wrought up to a compliance with the gospel
way of Salvation? How many other designs,
projects and essayes doth it follow; with a piece
of natural vehemency and seriousness, without
wearying, were it even to the wasting of the
body and spirits, let be, its substance & riches,
before it be brought to a closeing with a con-
fessed Mediator, and to an accounting of all its for-
mer workings, attainments, and painful la-
bourings, and gaine, as losse for Christ, and for
the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and ac-
cording that it may win Christ, and be found in Him,
not having its own righteousness, which is of the
law, but that which is through the faith of Christ,
the righteousness, which is of God by faith, Rom.
3: 21, 8, 9. And may it not seem strange, that
now

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now, after so many have found, through the
grace of God, the sweet experience of the gra-
cious workings of the gospel grace of God up-
on their hearts, and so are in cases as having
this witness within them, to give verdict ag-
gainst those assertions, yea more and many more,
than were in several ages before; yea Satan's
should become so bold, as to venture these des-
perate opinions, so diametrically opposite to the
Grace of God, declared in the Gospel, and
ingraved in the Hearts of many hundreds, by
the finger of God, confirming, in the most un-
doubted manner, the truth of the gospel do-
ctrines. This would seem to day, that there
are such clear, sunshine days of the Gospel, and
of the Son of man, as coming, and who can
tell how soon this night shall be an end; and
that all these doctrines of nature shall receive a
more conspicuous and shameful dash, than they
have received for these many ages. Hither it
was when Satan raised up, and sent forth his qualified
instruments, for this desperate work, God al-
ways prepared carpenters to fight these horns,
and thus Gospel truth came forth, as gold
out of a furnace, more clear and shining. And
who can tell but there may be a dispensation of
the pure grace of God, in opposition to these
perverting ways of Satan, yet to come, that
as to the measure of light and power, shall ex-
cell, whatever hath been, since the Apostles
days. *Even so come Lord Jesus!*

However, *Madam*, the Grace of God

will

won

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will be what it is, to all the chosen and ransomed ones. They will finde that in it, which will make whatever cometh in competition therewith or would darken it, contemptible in their eyes. And happy they, of whom in this day wherein darkness covereth the earth and grosse darkness the people, it may be said, the Lord hath arisen upon them, and his glory hath been seen upon them: for whatever others whose understanding is yet darkened, and they alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, imagine of the Gospel Grace, and however they mislearn nothing of the heavenly and spiritual glory of the Grace of God, yet they being delivered or cast into the form and mould of the doctrine of the Gospel, which they have obeyed from the heart, through the powerful and irresistible efficacy of the mighty grace of God, have seen such an alluring excellency, in this gracious contrivance of infinite wisdom, to set forth the unparalleled beauty of the pure grace of God, and are daily seeing more and more of the graciousness & wisdom of that heavenly invention, in its adequateness and suitableness to all their necessities, that as they cannot but admire and commend the riches of that grace, that interlineth every sentence of the gospel, and the greatness of that love, that hath made such a completely broad plaster, to cover all their sores and wounds; so the longer they live, and the more they drink of this pure fountain

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substance of heavenly *nectar*; and the more their
faculties press them, to a taking on of new
obligations, because of new supplies from the
occasions of grace: the more they are made to ad-
mire the Wisdom & Goodness of the Author;
and the more they are made to fall in love with
to delight, and lose themselves in the thoughts
of this incomprehensible grace of God; yet
and to long to be there, where they shall be
in better case to contemplate, and have more
wit to wonder at, and better dexterity to praise,
and stronger heart to muse upon, and a more
enlarged heart to praise for this boundless and
endless measure of the Grace of God, with
which they are enriched, through Jesus Christ
Sure; if we be not thus enamoured & ravished
with it, it is because we are yet standing with-
out, or, at most, upon the threshold & bor-
der of this Grace; were we once got within
the jurisdiction of grace, and had yedded up
ourselves unto the power thereof, and were
living and breathing in this air; Oh how sweet
and might we have! What a kindly alchemist
would Grace be to us! As sin had reigned unto
death; even so grace should reign, through righte-
ousness, unto eternal life; by Jesus Christ, our
Lord Rom. 5: 21. Grace reigning within un-
through righteousness, would frame & fit our
souls for that eternal life, that is reserved to all
who come once under the commanding, dis-
cussing, strengthening, confirming, corroborat-
ing, and perfecting power of Grace: and
seeking

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seeking grace for grace, and so living and walking and spending upon Grace's cost and charges, O how lively, and thriving proficient might we be! The more we spent of grace (if it could be spent) the richer should we be in grace: O what an enriching trade must it be to trade with free Grace, where there is no losse, and all is gaine, the stock and gaine and all is ensured; yea more, labouring in Grace's field would bring us in Isaac's blessing, an hundred fold: But Alas! it is one thing to talk of Grace, but a far other thing to trade with Grace. When we are so great strangers unto the life of grace, through not breathing in the aire of grace, *how can the name of the Lord Iesus Christ be glorified in us, and we in Him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Iesus Christ, 2 Thes. 1: 12?* Consider we, what an affront and indignity it is unto the Lord dispenser of Grace, that we look so leine, and ill favoured, as if there were not enough of the saving bread of the grace of God, in our Father's house, or as if the great Steward, who is full of grace and truth, were unwilling to bestow it upon us, or grudged us of our allowance, when the fault is in ourselves, we will not follow the course, that Wise Grace, and Gracious Wisdome hath prescribed; we will not open our mouth wide, that He might fill us; nor goe to Him, with our narrowed or closed mouthes, that Grace might make way for grace, and widen the mouth for receiving

Dedictory.

of more grace; but lye by in our leanness and weakness: and alas we love too well to be so. O but grace be ill wared on us, who eary to unworthily with it, as we do: yet it is well with the gracious soul, that he is under grace: Tutor and care; for Grace will care for him, when he careth not much for it, nor yet seeth well to his owne welfare; Grace can & will prevent, yea must prevent, afterward, as well as at the first; that Grace may be Grace, and appear to be Grace, and continue unchangeably to be Grace, and so free Grace. Well is it with the Beleever, whom grace hath once taken by the heart, and brought within the bond of the Covenant of Grace, its dearest condition is not desperat: when corruption prevaileth to such an hight, that the man is given over for dead, there being no sense, no motion no warmth, no breath almost to be observed, yet Grace, when violently constrained by that strong distemper, to retire to a secret corner of the soul, & there to lurk and lye quiet, will yet at length, through the quickening, & reviving influences of Grace, promised in the Covenant, & granted in the Lords good time, come out of its prison, take the fields, & recover the empire of the soul; and then the dry & withered stocks, when the God of all grace will be as the dew unto Israel, shall blossome and grow as the lilie, and cast forth his roots as lebanon: his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as lebanon. It is a happy thing, either for Church or particular soul

The Epistle

to be planted in Grace's happy soyl, they lye open to the warm beames of the sun of righteousness; and though winter blasts may be sharpe and long; clouds may intercept the heat, and nipping frosts may cause a sad decay, and all the sap may returne and lye, as it were dormant, in the root; yet the winter will passe, the raine will be over and gone, and the flowers will appear on the earth: the time of the singing of birds will come, and the voice of the turtle will be heard in the land: then shall even the wilderness and solitary place be glade, and the desert shall rejoyce and blossom as the rose: it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoyce even with ioy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. We wonder that it is not alwayes hote summer dayes, a flourishing and fruitful season, with Soules and with Churches: But know we the thoughts of the Lord? See we to the bottom of the deep contrivances of infinite wisdom? Know we the usefulness, yea necessity, of long winter nights, stormy blasts, hail, raine, snow, and frost? Consider we, that our state, and condition, while here, calleth for those vicissitudes, and requireth the blowing of the north, as well as of the south windes? If we considered, how Grace had ordered all things for our best, and most for the glory and exaltation of Grace; we would sit down and sing, under the saddest of dispensations, and lying by faith.

Dedicatory.

faith and hope, we would rejoyce in the confident expectation of a gracious outgate, for as long as Grace predomineth (and that will be until Glory take the Empire) all will run in the channel of grace: and though now, sense (which is oft faiths unfaithful friend) will be alwayes suggesting false tales of God, and of His Grace unto unbelieve, and raising thereby discontents, doubts, feares, jealousies, and many distempers in the soul, to its prejudice and hurt; yet in end, Grace shall be seen to be Grace; and the faithful shall get such a full sight of this manifold Grace, as ordering, tempering, timing, shortening or continuing of all the sad and dismal dayes and seasons, that have passed over their own, or their Mothers head, that they shall see, that Grace did order all, yea every circumstance of all the various tossings, changes, ups & downs, that they did meet with. And O what a satisfying sight will that be, when the general assembly, and Church of the first borne, which are enrolled in heaven, and every individual saint shall come together, and take a view of all their experiences, the result of which shall be, Grace began, Grace carryed on, and Grace hath perfected all, Grace was at the bottome of all, and Grace crowned all. What shoutings Grace, Grace unto it, will be there: when the head stone shall be brought forth. What soul satisfying complacency in, & admiration at all, that is past, will a back look hereat yeeld, when every one shall be made

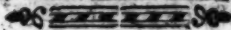
The Epistle Dedicatory.

to say, Grace hath done all well: not a pin of all the work of Grace in and about me might have been wanted; now I see, that the work of God is perfect, Grace was glorious Grace, and wise Grace, whatever I thought of it then; O what a fool have I been, in quarrelling at, and in not being fully satisfied with, all that Grace was doing with me? O how little is this beleev'd now?

In confidence, *Madam*, that your *La:* (to me no wayes known, but by a savoury report) shall accept of this bold address, I recommend your *La:* my very noble Lord your Husband, and offspring, to the word of His grace, and subscribe my self Your and Their

*Servant in the Gospel of the
Grace of God.*

JOHN BROWN.



Christian Reader,



1. thou answer this designation, and art really a partaker of the *Uction*, which is the high import of that blessed and glorious name called upon thee, thine eye must affect thy heart, and a soul swelled with Godly sorrow must at last burst and bleed forth at a weeping eye, while thou looks upon most of this licentious and loathsome generation, arrived at that height of prodigious profaniry, as to glory in their shame, and boast of bearing the very badge and blake marke of damnation. But, besides this swarme, who savage it to hell, and make such hast thither, as they foame themselves into everlasting flames, carrying, under the shape and visage of men, as Devils in disguise. The face of the Church is covered with a scame of such, who are so immersed in the concerns of this life, and are so intense in the pursuit of the pleasures, gaine and honours thereof, as their way doth manifestly witnesse them to be sunk into the deep oblivion of God, and desperat inconsideration of their precious and immortal souls: But in the 3. place besides these, who are hurried into such a distraction with the cares of this life, that they as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, are never at leasure to consider either the nature and necessitie of their noble souls, or to converse with the notion of a Deitie. Thou may perceiv a company of self deceiving speculatists, who make broad the phylacteries of their garments,

To the

ments, and boast of some high attainments, in religion; yea, would have others look upon them as arrived at the very porch of heaven, and advanced to a high pitch of proficiency in the wayes of God, because they can discourse a little of the mysteries of salvation, and without ever diving further into the depth and true nature of Religion, dream themselves into a confidence of being saints, and conclude themselves Candidats for glory.

This is that heart-mooving object, which presents itself to thy eye & observation this day: this is that deplorable posture, wherein thou mayst perceive most men at the very point of perishing eternally, who are within the pale of the visible Church; some dancing themselves headlong in all haste into the lake of fire and brimstone; some so much concerned in things, which have no connexion with their happiness, as to drop unconcernedly into the pit, out of which there is no redemption; and others dreaming themselves into endless perdition; & all of them unite in a deriding at or despising the means used, & essays made, in order to their recovery.

Now while Religion (which is the beautie of the soul, and the basis of mans blessednesse, advancing him both to a conformity to God, and qualifying him for the fruition of Him) by the generality of those, called to be saints, (that they may be saved) is not onely upon deliberation and choice laid aside, as having nothing in it to recommend and endear it to the souls of men, but hated, flouted, fled from and forsaken, as if it came on purpose to marre mens tranquillity, and torment them before the time. While I say it is thus some faithful

Servants,

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Servants, who make conscience to carry on His work, who came to destroy the works of the Devil, and went about, while in the world, healing all that were oppressed of him, set themselves to pray, preach and perswad the things concerning the Kingdome of God, yea to write and warne and weep men into a compliance with their own happinesse; they endeavour solicitously to informe mens minds, that they may reforme their manners, and rescue them with feare, who are runing upon their own ruine, but alas with so little successe, that they doe the work of the Lord with grief, and have much sorrow of those, of whom they ought to have joy; and after all their beseechings, obtestings, requestings and cryings, *this is the way, walke yee in it, turne you, turne, oh! why will you dye;* have this as the last returne to all their importunities, *Nay, there is no hope; speake no more to us of that matter; do not offer to perswade us to relinquish the old road, or dissuade us from following our lovers; for when ye have done all, after these we will go; we resolve to abide, what we have been, children of impietie.*

But if his Servants, in following their work closely, seem to have gained a little ground upon men, and almost perswaded them to be Christians, Satan, to the end he may make all miscarry, and counterworke these workers together with God, and poison poor souls by a perversion of the Gospel, beyond the power of an antidote, hath raised up, instigated, and set on work a race of proud Rationalists (for they are wiser then to classe themselves amongst those poor fools, those base things, those

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nothings, to whom Christ is made all things, to whom Christ is made wisdom that he may be righteousness, sanctification and redemption to them; nay, they must be wise men after the flesh, wise above what is written: a crucified Christ is really unto them foolishness and weakness, though the power of God and the wisdom of God; they will needs go to work another way; they will needs glory in his presence, and have a heaven of their own hand-wind. (O my soul enter not into their secrets! and, O sweet Jesus, let thy name be to me, the Lord my righteousness, thou hast won it, wear it; and gather not my soul with such, who make mention of any other righteousness, but of thine only!) to bring in another Gospel amongst men, then the Gospel of the grace of God; as they determine to know some other thing then Christ and him crucified; so with the enticing words of mans wisdom, they bewitch men into a disobedience to the truth, setting somewhat else before them then a crucified Christ: And this they do, that they may remove men from those, who call them into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel: A Christ, it is true, they speak of; but it is not the Christ of God; for all they drive at (O cursed and truly Antichristian design!) is, that he may profite them nothing, while they model all Religion according to this novel project of their magnified *morality*? This is that which gives both life and lustre to that image they adore, to the Dagon, after whom they would have the world wonder and Worship.

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That there is such a *moralizing* or *muddizing* (if I may be for once admitted to coine a new word to give these men their due) of Christianity now introduced and coming in fashion, many of the late pieces in request do evince? Now, that Christianity should moralize men above all things, I both give and grante; for he who is partaker of the divine nature, and hath obtained precious faith, must adde vertue to his faith; But that it should be only conceived and conceited as an elevation of nature to a more cleare light, in the matter of morality, wherein our Lord is onely respected, as an heavenly teacher, and perfect paterne proposed for imitation, is but a proud pleasing fanſie of self conceited, darkened and deluded dreamers, robing God of the glory of his mercy and goodnesse; our Lord Jesus Christ of the glory of his grace and merit; The Spirit of the efficacy of his glorious and mighty operations; and themselves and their pilgrimes, who give them the hand as guides, of the comfort and frute of all.

This is the *pilgrimage*, we are perswaded to undertake to the holy Land; this is that *reasonablenesse* of *Christianitie*, which with great swelling words of vanitie is ventilat, to the allureing and ensnareing of such, who had almost escaped the corruption, which is in the world through lust, and the pollutions of the flesh through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; This is the way which they, who undertake to publish to the world the true causes of the decay of pietie, take to revive and introduce that pietie, which they complain is wanting: O impious invention, not only

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encroaching upon the unsearchable myſterie of the Gospel; but ſubverſive of the whole method, and bleſſed and beautiful contrivance of ſalvation, and rendering ſalvation impoſſible to the greateſt proficients in this ſtudie; and the grand patrons and practitioners in this new art, the greateſt oppoſers of that grace of God, which bringeth ſalvation unto all men. It is true, they will not plainly plead for profanitie, Nay, they may and do make a great noiſe about the practice of pietie, as if they were the only patrons thereof; that with leſſe obſervation and greater facility, they may beguile themſelves and their followers of the reward: they may poſſibly perſwade even to a pinching of the body, that they may puffe up, and pamper their fleſhly minde; and while they overdrive men to the practice of will-worſhip, and performance of thoſe things, which have a ſhew of wiſdome, it is that they may withdraw them from holding that bleſſed head, from which all the body by joints & bands, having nourishment miniſtered, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God; yet the grace of God, that onely living principle of all true pietie, which they diſpute out of the ſouls of men, that they may debauch them into a contempt of the Spirits working in men to will and to do, takes frequent vengeance on this their invention, by leaving them not onely to play the Devil in diſguiſe, that they may be known by their fruits; but alſo to lay aſide that garbe of external godlineſſe, (for the Devil nor his Domestiſts cannot long weare a ſtrait doublet) that it may appear, how it is verified in them, *from him that hath not ſhall be taken away*

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away even that he hath ; which is so plain , that to many of these pleaders for this new way , and their proselyts , in the righteous judgement of God , it happeneth according to the true proverb , the dog is turned to his owne vomit againe , and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire .

It cannot escape thy observation , how busie Satan is this day , upon the one hand , to keep men , under the call of the Gospel to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure , idle all the day ; so that no perswasion can enduce them to engage seriously to fall about a working out their own salvation in feare and trembling ; and on the other , equally diligent and industrious to divert men from trusting in the name of the Lord , and staying upon their God ; setting them on work to go and gather fewel , and kindle a fire , and compassse themselves about with sparks , that they may walk in the light of their own fire , and in the sparks that they have kindled , knowing well that they shall this way most certainly lose their toil and travel , and have no other reward at his hand of all their labour , but to ly down in everlasting sorrow , while the stout hearted and far from righteousness , and salvation , shall get their soul for a prey , and be made to rejoyce in his salvation , and blesse him who hath made them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light .

It is fit therefore , in order to thy own establishment in the present truth , and that thou mayest so work , that thy labour be not in vaine , but God may accept thy works , often to think , and seriously to consider in thy own soul , what that

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Gospel holinesse is, and what these men substitute in the place of it, that thou may choice the perfect and pleasant way of Gospel holinesse, and exercise thy self to that godlinesse, *which is profitable for all things, haveing the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

I am neither the fit person for so great an undertaking, nor do these limits, within which I must bound my self, permit me to expatiate, in many notions about the nature of this excellent and precious thing, true Gospel holinesse: Oh if, in the entry, I could on my own behalfe and others, sob out my *Alas*, from the bottome of my soul, because, be what it will, it is some other thing then men take it to be: few habituate themselves to a thinking upon it, in its high nature, and soul enriching advantages, till their hearts receive suitable impressions of it, and their lives be the very transcript of the law of God written in their heart; the thing (*Alas!*) is lost in a noise of words, and heap of notions about it, neither is it a wonder that men fall into mistakes about it, since it is onely the heart possessed of it that is capable to understand & perceive its true excellency: But if it be asked, what it is? we say, it may be shortly taken up, as the elevation and raising up of a poor mortal unto a conformity with God; As a participation of the divine nature; or as the very image of God stamped on the soul, impressed on the thoughts & affections, and expressed in the life and conversation; so that the man, in whom Christ is formed, and in whom he dwells, lives and walks, hath, while upon the earth, a conversation in heaven;

not

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not only in opposition to those many; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who minde earthly things; but also to these pretenders unto & personaters of religion, who have confidence in the flesh, & Worship God with their own Spirit (which in the matters of God is flesh, and not Spirit) and have somewhat else to rejoyce in, then in Christ Jesu, and a being found in him not having their own righteousness.

True Gospel holinesse then consists in some similitude and likenesse to God, and fellowship with him, founded upon that likenesse: there is such an impression of God, his glorious attributes, his infinit Power, Majesty, Mercy, Justice, Wisdom, Holinesse, and Grace, &c. As sets him up all alone in the soul without any competition, and produceth those real apprehensions of him, that he is alone excellent and matchlesse. O how preferable doth he appeare, when indeed seen, to all things? And how doth this light of his infinit gloriousnesse, shineing into the soul, darken & obscure to an invisiblenesse all other excellencies, even as the rising of the sun makes all the lesser lights to disappear. Alas! how is God unknown in his glorious being and attributes? When once the Lord enters the soul, and shines into the heart, it is like the rising of the sun at midnight: all these things, which formerly pretended to some lovelinesse, and did dazil with their lustre, are eternally darkened: now all natural perfections and moral vertues, in their flower and perfections are at best looked upon as *aliquid nihil*: what things were formerly accounted gaye and godlinesse, are now counted

To the

losse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ
Jesus the Lord; and the soul cannot onely suffer
the losse of them all without a sob, but be satisfied
to throw them away as dung, that it may win him,
and be found in him. Now the wonder of a Deity,
in his greatnesse, power and grace, swallows up
the soul in sweet admiration: O how doth it love
to lose it self in finding here what it cannot fathom?
And then it begins truly to see the greatnesse and
evil of sin; then it is looked upon without the co-
vering of pleasure or profit, and Toathed as the
leprosy of hell. Now the man is truly like God in
the knowledge of good and evil, in the knowledge
of that one infinit good, *God*; & in the knowledge
of that one almost infinit evil, *sin*. This is the first
point of likenesse to him, to be conformed to him
in our understanding, that as he knowes himself
to be the onely self being and fountain good, and
all created things in their flour and perfection, with
all their real or fancied conveniencies being com-
pared with him, but as the drop of a bucket, the
small dust of the ballance, or nothing, yea lesse
then nothing, vanity; (which is nothing blown
up, by the force or forgery of a vainly working
imagination, to the consistence of an appearance)
so for a soul to know indeed and beleve in the
heart, that there is nothing deserves the name of
good besides God, to have the same superlative and
transcendent thoughts of that great and glorious
self being *God*, and the same diminishing and de-
baseing thoughts of all things & beings besides him.
And that as the Lord seeth no evil in the creation
but sin, and hates that with a perfect hatred, as

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contrary to his holy will ; so for a soul to aggravate sin in its own sight to an infiniteness of evil, at least till it see it onely short of infiniteness in this respect, that it can be swallowed up of infinit mercy. But whence hath the soul all this light ? It owes all this and owns it self as debtor for it to him, *who opens the eyes of the blind* : it is he *who commands the light to shine out of darkeness*, who hath made these blessed discoveries, and hath given the poor benighted soul, *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ* : These irradiations are from the Spirits illumination : it is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that hath made day light in the darkened soul : the man who had the heart of a beast, as to any saving or solid knowledge of God or himself, hath now got an understanding to know him that is true : now is Christ become the poor mans *wisdom*, he is now *renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him* : he might well bable of spiritual things, but till now he understood nothing of the beauty & excellency of God and his wayes : Nay, he knew not what he knew, he was ignorant as a beast of the life and lustre of those things, which he knew in the letter : nothing seemed more despicable to him in the world, then true godliness ; but now he judgeth otherwise, because he hath the mind of Christ : the things, which in his darkeness he did undervalue as trifles to be mocked at, he now can onely minde and admire, since he became a child of light : now being delivered from that blindness and brutishness of Spirit, which possesseth the world, (and possessed himself till he was trans-

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formed

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formed by the renewing of his minde) who esteeme basely of spiritual things and set them at nought, he prizeth as alone precious: the world wonders, what pleasure or content can be in the service of God, because they see not by tasting how good he is: to be prying into, and poring upon invisible things, is to them visible madness, but to the enlightened minde, the things that are not seen are onely worth seeing, and while they appeare not to be they onely are; whereas the things that are seen appeare but to be, and are not. Though the surpassing sweetnesse of spiritual things should be spoke of to them, who cannot favour the things of God, in such a manner as the glorious light of them did surround men; yet they can perceive no such thing: all is to them cunningly devised fables: let be spoke what will, they see no forme, no comelinesse, no beauty in this glorious object, God in Christ reconciling sinners to himself. Alas the mind is blinded, the dungeon is within; and till Christ open the eyes, as well as reveal his light, the soul abides in its blindness, and is buried in midnight darknesse; but when the Spirit of God opens the mans eyes, and he is translated by an act of omnipotency out of the kingdome of darknesse into the kingdome of his dear son, which is a kingdom of marvellous light; O! what matchlesse beauty doth he now see in these things, which appeared despicable and like nothings to him, till he got the unction, the eye salve, which teacheth all things: now he sees (what none without the Spirit can see) the things, which God hath prepared for them that love him, and are freely given them.

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of God ; and these , though seen at a distance , reflect such rayes of beauty into his soul , that he beholds and is ravished , he sees and is swallowed up in wonder.

But then, in the next place, this is not a Spirit-lesse inefficacious Speculation about these things, to know no evil but sin and separation from God, and no blessednesse but in the fruition of him ; it is not such a knowledge of them as doth not principle motion to pursue after them. This, I grant , is part of the image of God , when the sun of righteousness , by arising upon the man , hath made day light in his soul , and by these divine discoveries hath taught him to make the true parallel betwixt things that differ , and to put a just value upon them according to their intrinsick worth : But this divine illumination doth not consist in a meer notion of such things in the head , nor doth it subsist in enlightening the mind ; but in such an impression of God upon the soul , as transformes and changes the heart into his likenesse by love: knowledge is but one line , one draught or lineament of the souls likenesse to him ; that alone doth not make up the image ; but knowledge rooted in the heart, and engraven on the soul , shining & shewing it self forth in a gospel adorneing conversation, that makes a comely proportion ; when the same hand that touched the eye , and turned the man from darknesse to light , and gave an heart to know him , that he is the Lord , doth also circumscribe the mans heart , to love the Lord his God , with all his heart , and with all his soul , and with all his minde , and this love manifesting its liveli-

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nesse, in its constraining power to live to him and for him: light without heat is but wild fire; but light in the mind begetting heat in the heart, making it burne Godward, Christward, and Heavenward, light in the understanding setting on fire and enflaming the affections, and these shining out in a heavenly conversation, makes up the lively image of God, both in feature & stature, both in proportion and colour: faith begins this image and drawes the lineaments; and love bringing forth obedience finishes, and gives it the lively lustre: the burnings of love in obedience to God is that which illuminates the whole, and makes a man look indeed like him, to whose image he is predestinated to be conforme, and then makes him, who is ravished with the charmes of that beauty, say, as in a manner overcome thereby, *how fair is thy love, my Sister, my spouse? How much better is thy love, then wine, and the smell of thine ointments then all spices?* But consider, that as these beames, which irradiate the soul, are from the Spirit of Christ, so that spiritual heat and warmth come out of the same aitch, and proceed from the same Author; for our fire burnes as he blowes, our lampe shines as he snuffes and furnisheth oile: men therefore would not indulge themselves in this delusion, to think that, that which will passe for pure Religion and undefiled before God, consists either in an outward blamelesse conversation, or in putting on and weareing an external garbe of profession: no, as the top of it reacheth higher, so the root of it lies deeper; it is rooted in the heart, this seed being sown in an honest

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honest heart](or making the heart honest, in which it is sown) takes root downe ward, and brings forth fruit upward; as trees that grow as far underground as above, so these trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that he may be glorified, grow as far and as fast underground, as above; godlinesse growes as far downward in self emptying, self denyal and self abaseing, in hungering and thirsting after more of righteousness, in the secrete engagements of the heart to God in Christ, in these burstings of heart and bleedings of soul (to which God alone is witnesse) because of shortcoming in holinesse, because of a body of death within, and because of that law in the members warring against the law of the mind, and bringing often in to captivity to the law of sin; as it growes upward in a profession: and this is that pure Religion and undefiled before God, which is both most pleasant to him, and profitable to the soul.

But to make the difference betwixt *dead morality*, in its best dress, and *true godlinesse*, more cleare and obvious (that the loveliness of the one may engage men into a loathing of the other, this dead carion and stinking carcase of *rotten morality*, which still stinks in the nostrills of God, even when embalmed with the most costly ointments of its miserably misled patrons) we say, that true godhnesse, which in quality and kinde differs from this much pleaded for and applauded *morality* (a blake heachen by a mongrel kinde of Christians baptized of late with the name of Christianity, and brought into the temple of the Lord, concerning which he hath commanded that it should

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should never, in that shape, and for that end it is introduced, enter into his congregation; and the bringers for their pains are like to seclude themselves for ever from his presence) It respects Jesus Christ. 1. As its *Principle*. 2. As its *Paterne*. 3. As its *Altar*, and. 4. As its *end*.

First, I say, true holinesse, in its being and operation, respects Jesus Christ as its *principle*: I live, (said that shining saint) yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: as that which gives religion its first being, is the religion of the soul to God; so that which gives it motion, and draws forth that life into action, is the same God's working all their works in them and for them, so that in all they do, they are workers together with God; every act of holinesse is an act of the soul made alive unto God through Jesus Christ, and quickened to each action by the supervenience of new life and influence: therefore, says Christ, *without me you can do nothing*: it is not, being out of me you can do nothing (for he spoke it to those who were in him) but if ye leave me out in doing, all ye do will be nothing: Its Jesus Christ who gives life and leggs, so that our runings are according to his drawings: *my soul followeth hard after thee* (said that holy man;) but whence is all this life and vigour? *Thy right hand upholdeth me*. O it is the upholdings and helpings of this right hand, enlarging the mans heart, that makes a running in the way of his commandments; it is he who, while the saints work out the work of their own salvation, worketh in them both to will and to do: It is he, who giveth power to the faint, and who to them that have no
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might encrease strength; so that the poor life-
lesse, languishing *ly by* is made to mount-up with
Eagles wings, and surmount all these difficulties,
with a holy facility, which were simply insupera-
ble, and pure impossibilities: now the man runs
and doth not weary, because Christ drawes; and
he walks and doth not faint, because Christ, in
whom dwels the fulnesse of the God-head bodily,
dwels in him, and walks in him, and dwels in
him for that very end; that he may have a com-
pleatnesse and competency of strength for duety: all
grace is made to abound unto him, that he alwayes
having all sufficiency in all things, may abound
unto every good work: he is able of himself to do
nothing, no not to think any thing as he ought,
but he hath a sufficiency of God, whereby he is
thorowly furnished unto every good work; so that
he may say, *I am able for all things*, it is more
then *I am able to do all things* (as we read it). Its
just import is. *I am able to do all things*, and to
endure all things; and that which keeps it from
vain boasting is what is added, *through Christ which
strengtheneth me, or putting power in me, or rather
impowering me*, which is by a supervenient act
drawing forth life into a liveliness of exercise,
according to the present exigent. * There is a power
in a saint, because Christ is in him, that overpow-
ers all the powers of darkenesse without, and all
the power of indwelling corruption within; so that
when the poor weak creature is ready to despond,
within sight of his duty, and say because of diffi-
culty, *what is my strength that I should hope?* Christ
saith, despond not, *my grace is sufficient for thee*,
and

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and my power shall rest upon thee, to a reviving thee, and raising thee up, and putting thee in case to say, when I am weak then am I strong; his strength, who impowers me, is made perfect in my weaknesse, so that I will glory in my infirmities, and be glade in being graces debtor. But what power is that, which raiseth the dead sinner, and carries the soul in its actings so far without the line, and above the sphere of all natural activity, when stretched to its utmost? O it is an exceeding great power, which is to them ward who beleve, that must make all things, how difficult so ever, easie, when he works in them to will and to do, according to the working of his mighty power (or as it is upon the margent, & more emphatick, of the might of his power) which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, &c. he that raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead, raiseth up beleivers also by Jesus, and being raised and revived by him, to walk in newnesse of life: the life of Jesus, in its communications of strength, is manifest in their mortal flesh, according to that of the same Apostle, the life that I live in the flesh (saies he) I live by the faith of the Son of God: faith brings in Christ in my soul, and Christ being my life carries out my soul, in all the acts of obedience, wherein, though I be the formal agent, yet the efficiency and the power, by which I operat, is from him; so that I can give no better account of it, then this, I not I. But who then, if not you? The grace of God, saies he, which was with me. But this mystery to our bold, because blind, moralists, of
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an indwelling Christ, working mightily in the soul, is plain madnesse and melancholy; however we understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, who said, *the life I live in the flesh*, &c. and from what we understand of his knowledge in that mystery, which he had by revelation, we understand, our *moralists* to be men of corrupt minds, who concerning the faith have made shipwreck; but what is that, *the life I live in the flesh*, &c? The import of it seems to be this, if not more, while I have in me a soul animating my body, as the principle of all my vital and natural actions, I have Jesus Christ animating my soul, and by the impulse and communicat vertue and strength of an indwelling Christ, I am made to run the wayes of his commandements, wherein I take so great delight, that I am foud of no duty as of my enemy.

Secondly, This gospel holinesse respects Jesus Christ as its *patern*. It proposeth no lower patern for imitation, then to be conforme to his image; he that is *begotten againe unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*, girds up the *loins of his minde* (which are the affections of his soul, lest by falling flat upon the earth he be hindered in running the race set before him, as looking to the forerunner his patern) in this girdle of hope, that he may be *holy in all manner of conversation*, keeping his eye upon the precept and paterne, that his practice may be conforme. It is written, saith he, *Be ye holy for I am holy*, the hope of seeing God, and being ever with him imposeth a necessity upon him who hath it, to look no lower, then

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at him, who is glorious in holinesse; and therefore he is said to *purify himself, even as he is pure*; and knowing that this is the end of their being quickened together with Christ, that they may walk even as he walked; they, in their working and walking, aime at no lesse then to be like him; and therefore never sit down upon any attained measure, as if they were already perfect: the spotlesse purity of God expressed in his laws, is that whereto they study assimilation; therefore they are still in motion towards this mark, and are changed from one degree of glorious grace into another, into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, who never gives over his putting them to cleanse from all filthinesse of the flesh and of the Spirit; till that be true in the truest sense, *thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.* And knowing that perfect fruition of him cannot be without perfect conformity to him, herein do they exercise themselves, to grow in grace, and to be still advancing towards some more likenesse to his image, forgetting all their attainments, as things that are behind, and by their reachings forth unto that which is before, make it evident, that they make every begun degree of grace and conformity to God, a convenient capacity for a new degree, which yet they have not attained. I know, our *maralists* look upon themselves as matchlesse, in talkeing of following his steps, as he hath left us an example: in this they make a flourish with flanting effrontry, but for all their boasting of wisdom, such a poor simple man as I am made to wonder at their folly, who propounding, as they say, the purity of Christ for their
patern,

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paterne, are not even thence convinced, that in order to a conformity thereto, there is a simple & absolute necessity of the mighty operations of that Spirit of God, whereby this end can be reached; but while they flout at the Spirits working, as a melancholy fancy, whereby the soul is garnished with the beauty of holinesse, and made an habitation for God, I doubt not to say of these great *sayers*, that they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirme: nay doth not their talking of the one, not only without seeing the necessity of the other, but speaking against it, say in the heart of every one, (who hath not the heart of a beast) that they have never yet got a sight of the holinesse of that paterne, nor of their own pollutions and impotency; for if they had, they would give themselves up to Jesus Christ to be washed by him, without which they can have no part with him. O there will be a vast difference, at the latter day, betwixt them who have given their blake souls to Jesus Christ to bleach, when he shall present them without spot, not onely cloathed with wrought gold, but all glorious within, and these who have never dipped, yea who have despised to dip their defiled souls in any other fountain, save in the impure puddle of their own performances; this will make them loathsome in his sight, and cause his soul abhorre those, who have done this despite unto the Spirit of grace, as to slight that blessed fountaine, opened for us & for uncleannesse, let them pretend as high as they will, to look to him, as a paterne, while (because the plague sore is got up in their eye) they look not to him as a price, nor

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to the grace of Jesus Christ, as that which can onely principle any acceptable performance of duty, he will plunge them in the ditch, and it will cost them their souls, for rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, in not making use of him who came by water, as well as by blood.

Thirdly, This gospel holinesse respects Christ as the *Altar*. It is in him and for him that his soul is well pleased with our performance, this is the Altar, upon which thou must lay thy gift, & leave it, without which thy labour is lost, and whatsoever thou dost is loathed, as a corrupt thing. As beleevers draw all their strength from him, so they expect acceptation onely through him, and for him: they do not look for it, but in the beloved: they dare not draw near to God in duty, but by him: this is the new and liveing way, which is consecrat for them: and if such, who offer to come to God, do not enter in hereat, in stead of being admitted to a familiar converse with God, they shall finde him a consuming fire: when the saints have greatest liberty in prayer (and so of all other performances, when their hearts are most lifted up in the wayes of the Lord) they abhorre at thinking their prayer can any otherwise be set forth before him as incense, or the lifting up of their hands as the evening sacrifice, but as presented by the great intercessor, and perfumed by the merit of his oblation. If they could weep out the marrow of their bones, and the moisture of their body in mourning over sin; yet they durst not think of having what comes from so impure a spring. and

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runs thorow so polluted a channel, presented to God but by Jesus Christ, in order to acceptation; for as they look to the exalted Saviour, to get their repentance from him, so when by the pourings out upon them the Spirit of grace and supplication, he hath made them pour out their hearts before him, and hath melted them into true tenderneſſe, so that their mourning is a great mourning, they carry backe these teares to be washed and bathed in his blood, as knowing without this of how little worth and value with God their salt water is; but when they are thus washed, he puts them in his bottle, and then pours them out again to them in the wine of strong consolation; thus are they made glade in his house of prayer, and their sighes and groanes come up with acceptance upon his Altar. O blessed Altar, that sanctifies the gold! This is that Altar, whereto the *mocking moralist* hath no right. It is by him, that the poor beleever offers up his sacrifice to God continually; what ever he doth, in word or deed, he desires to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus: as he knowes, He lives to make intercession, and to appeare in the presence of God for his poor people, both to procure influences for duty, and plead for acceptation; so he depends upon him for both, as knowing he can never otherwise beare, or have it said unto him, *well done, good and faithfull servant*. It may be he can do little, he hath but a mite to offer; but he puts it in the mediators hand to be presented to God: he hath not gold, nor silver, nor purple to bring, he can do no great things, he hath but goats hair or rams skine, but he gives them the right tincture, he

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He makes them red in the blood of Christ, and so they are a beautiful incarnat.

Lastly, This Gospel holinesse respects Jesus Christ as its *last end*: as it hath its being from him, so it is all directed toward the praise of his grace; while the beleeving soule in whom Christ dwells designs no lesse, and aims at no lower mark, then assimilation to God, and fruition of him, while he is endeavouring, alwayes and in all things, to be unlike himself and what he was, that he may be like God; it is not to be like him on that wicked and wretched designe, which man had at first in his eye, whereby he lost his God, and unmade a many; but it is that thereby he may be in better case to glorify him, and that God may be the more endeared to his own soule, because of what he hath done for him, and commended and made precious to the soules of others, while they take notice of what a change grace hath not onely made in his most eminent appearances for God: he contracts himself into a disappearance, that God may appeare and be seen, in the shining glory of his grace bestowed upon him: for the godly man of all men is the most humble: this is the garbe he cloaths himself with, if his face shine in his accesses to God, that pride may be hid from his eyes, he wots not of it; the very thoughts of robing God of his glory, and clothing himself with the spoils of his honour, are terrible to him, and looked upon as that wherein the soule resembles Satan most manifestly; and therefore that great practitioner, who our stript all others in doing and suffering for God, dare not stand up to intercept the glory due to his Master,

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Master, but ascribes all to him, with a *nevertheless, nevertheless not I, but the grace of God which was with me*: what hast thou, which thou hast not received, prevents his boasting, and imposeth the necessity of blessing the donor: the mark he aims at in his exercising himself to godliness, is mainly this, that *men seeing his good works may glorify his Father which is in heaven*. As he knowes, he acts not in his own strength, but in his, who counts him worthy of the high calling, and fulfils all the good pleasure of his goodnesse in him, and the work of faith with power; so he considers for what all this is, it is that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him, according to the grace of our God & the Lord Jesus Christ: and he hath a sweet complacency in complying with this God-exalting and grace-magnifying designe: when grace hath set a crown upon his head, and made him a *king* (for the meanest believer is truly a more illustrious Prince, then the greatest Potentat of the earth, not onely because under his rags lyes hide a title to a crown, and his expectation is to sit with Christ upon his throne; but because he is already crowned with loving kindenesse and tender mercies, and doth, while on the earth, sit together with Christ in heavenly places; Christ is possessed of glory in his stead, as his representee and head, and a man is all crowned and acknowledged as king, when his head is crowned) he knowes he is made a *priest* also, to sacrifice it to the giver; and therefore he casts downe his crown before the throne with this, *thou art worthy to receive glory and honour*, &c. and he esteems the

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the priviledge of doing so, as great as the prerogative of haveing it set on: when he works hardest to adorne himself with the beauty of holinesse, it is not so much that his beauty may appeare perfect, as that that grace, to which he is a debtor for all his comelinesse, may shine in its lustre; and his vertues, who hath called him to glory and vertue, may be shewed forth: he designs not, in his diligence in duty, to be taken notice of as a singular saint, but his great and shining singularity, which he doth most ambitionar, lyes in this, that Christ, in the communications of his grace, and efficacy of his influence, may be admired in him, as in all that beleve. In a word, as all he hath is of him and from him, so all he does or designs is for him and to him; it is Christ to him to live, in whom Christ lives: now this is the very nature of pure religion and undefiled, and that which compleats the image of God, and puts it beyond all debar, that his soul hath received the stamp and impression of the royal seal on it, and that his heart is the epistle of Christ, written not with inck and pen, but with the Spirit of the living God, when his glory and the exaltation of the manifold grace, and manifold wisdom of God, in the contrivance of salvation, is upmost in his thinkings, desirings, projectings and endeavourings, and hath the first place in the roll of his wishings; while other men seek their own things, it is his own, his onely own, his one, his all, to seek the things of Christ, that blessed seeker, who came to seek him and save him; and being found of him, he endeavours to carry as one no more his owne; the glorifying of him in
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his body and Spirit, which are his, because bought by him, is his begun heaven; and the greatest errand he hath in heaven, is to get a more cleare sight of that blessed object of all admiration and adoration, and to be in better case to cry him up for ever.

Now this is but a short and general Character, drawn by an unskilful hand, of that holinesse, which will abide the test, and be found true, when tried by the touch stone of the word.

But let us, on the other hand, take a short view of what our *moralists* substitute in its place, as (in their account) both more beautiful to the eye, and more beneficial to the souls of men; wherein I intend to be breife. I might compend the account to be given shortly, and give it most exactly, yet true-ly, in these few words. As the most undoubted deviation from, and perfect opposition unto the whole contrivance of salvation, and the conveyance of it unto the souls of men, as revealed in this gospel, which brings life and immortality to light, that fighters against the grace of God in its value and vertue can forge, stretching their blind reason to the overthrow of true religion, and ruine of the souls of men: for to this height these Masters of reason have in their blind rage risen up against the Lord and against his Anointed; this is the dreadful period of that path, wherein we are persuaded to walk, yea Hec-tored, if we would not forfeit the repure of men by these grand *Sophies*, who arrogat to themselves the name and thing of knowledge, as if wisdome were to dy with them. The deep my-
series of salvation, which Angels desire to look

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into, and onely satisfy themselves with admiration at, must appeare as respondents at their bar, and if they decline the judge and court, as incompetent, they flee out and flout at subjecting this blinde *mole*, mans reason, to the revelation of faith in a mystery. The manifold wisdom of God and the manifold grace of God, must either condescend to their unfoldings, and be content to speak in their dialect, or else these wits, these Athenian dictators will give the deep things of God, because beyond their diveings, the same entertainment, which that great gospel preacher, Paul, met with from men of the same mould, kidney and complexion, because he preached unto them Jesus, *what would this babler say*, said they; The Spirit of wisdom and revelation they know not, they have not, they acknowledge not, nay they despise him in his saving, and soul-ascertaining illuminations; and the workings of that mighty power to themward who beleeve, is to the men of this new mould (because they have not found it) an insufferable fansey, to be exploded with a disdain and indignation, which discovers what Spirit acts them in this opposition.

But what do they say, that will found this charge and free us from casting iniquity upon them? They are of age and can speake for themselves: when they have vomit out their gall against the imputed righteousness of Christ, and the new birth, and that holinesse, which is imparted to the real members of Christ, with a scoffing petulancy, they then make a great noise of holinesse, as who but they; the thing they plead for and perswade unto,

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is a kinde of holinesse educes out of natural abilities; wherein Christ, the Spirit and the Gospel of the grace of God, is permitted no greater interest, nor allowed a more effectual adjuvancy, then to con-
curre by way of precept, motive and example? This is now that admired and applauded *Diana, morality*. It is true, they will sometime chide thorow their teeth (for what ever Christ, the Spirit and Gospel gets of our *Moralists*, it is against the hair, and they are hard put to it, ere they give it) a tepid acknowledgement, that the gospel doth afford men some special help, and is of singular use and advantage, in shewing the way and rule with greater clearnesse, and guiding and directing how to walk in it with a plain perspicuity, and exciting by noble examples; and some do also adde some faint and frigid motions of the holy ghost, in the dispensation of this truth, put forth to make men more foreward; but all this *salvo jure* of the great Diana: so much and no more is yielded to the gospel, then to shew men with clearnesse, how they may exert and put forth their proper and innat power, it affords them some special help in holding the candle, or rather snuffing it, that so they may with more promptitude see how to operate, and by the motives it adduceth, and examples it brings, have a special provocation to the exercise of these vertues commanded: the gospel, with all it brings and doth, does no more but hold the candle, till these artists weave their web, shape and shew their garment, and then let them see how to put it on, and being put on persuade them to wear it, as the highest beauty and chief ornament of the soul: this is all the provision

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they lay up for eternity, and in this dresse and garb of gilded *morality*, they mind to addresse themselves to God, and appeare before his tribunal with confidence of acceptation: they will beare their own charges to heaven, and carry a summe with them to purchas: the possession of the saints in light, with a little abatement, which a mercy of their own moulding (for Gods mercy it is not) must make, and thus they make all sure.

But what is all this noise, that these vain talkers make about holinesse; they heap up words (which weep to be so abused) about vertue, love to God, mortification, &c. But they have really taken away our Lord Jesus Christ, and will not tell us where they have laid him, for feare we should go seek him, and forsake them. What are these rotten and loathsome raggs, where with they would cloath us, that the shame of our nakednesse may not appeare, to that holinesse, whereto we are predestinat before the foundation of the world, and whereto (in order to the obtaining of that salvation, even the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which we are chosen) we are created againe in Christ Jesus, and made meet to be possessed of by sanctification of the Spirit, and beleife of the truth? What is all this tattle of theirs to the *new birth*, the *saveing work of regeneration* (without which a man cannot enter into the kingdome of God) the *new creature*, the *new heart*, haveing the law written in it, the Spirit which he puts within us, causeing us to walk in his wayes; that noble principle of spiritual life, whereby we are quickened, raised from the dead, made alive unto God through Christ

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Christ Jesus, disposed, enclined and enabled to live to God, and walk before him to all pleasing? Nay, according to the imposings of these new dogmatists (beware of dogs, says the Apostle of the same size and sort of men) in stead of that principle implanted, and that power produced in us by the effectual operation of the H. G. working in us mightily, according to the workings of that mighty power, which was wrought in Christ, when raised from the dead; we must be content with somewhat, which was living, though lazie and dormant, in the natural powers of our own soul, now awakened out of its sopor, and educed into act by the meer application of external means: in a word, in stead of all that, which is purchased and procured unto us by the death of Jesus Christ, wrought in us by his Spirit (who takes of his, and shews it unto us) whereby our conformity to Jesus Christ is begun and carried on, we must be content with this *morality* (good Lord prevent such madnesse!) whose Principle is natural reason; whose Rule is the law of nature, as explained in the scriptures; whose use and end is acceptation with God, and justification before him; which is pure (impure) *Pelagianisme*, propagat now in *Brittan*, where it had its unhallowed birth; a tremendous signification of the high displeasure of God against these huffeing arrogants of this age, who, because they have not received the truth in love, are left to soul-murthering delusions, and for their despising the unsearchable riches of Christ, held forth in the gospel, are left, in stead of embracing Christ Jesus into their soul as altogether lovely,

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whom God hath made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption: to embrace in their bosome, and hug between their breasts this hell-borne, and (after all the cost they have bestowed upon it, wherein they are at the expence of their precious soul, if repentance prevent it not) hell-blake brate, *moralitie*, in opposition to that gospel holinesse, wherein conformity to God consists.

It concernes thee, *Christian Reader*, whose ever thou art, carefully to observe, that the great deligae, the Devil this day drives in the world, is how to introduce a Religion, amongst these called Christians, which for the soul and substance of it is an *Antichristian masse* and medly, substitute and obtruded, in place of the marrow of the gospel, & mysteries of salvation: And though Christ be named amongst these perverters of the gospel; yet he is really exautorat and robbed of his offices; and while false ends are assigned, the great end of his coming in the world is denied, and the blessed intendment and designe of the gospel of the grace of God is defeat. Now because Satan finds no mids so proper for his purpose, nor mean so certain to accomplish his end, as to corrupt the minds of men with perverse principles (for they are more then halfe way to hell, when their principles state them in an opposition to the Prince of life) he perverts them into a nauseating of the plain path way of salvation by a slain Saviour (for the preaching of the crosse, what ever they pretend, is really to them foolishnesse) and seduceth them into a satisfaction with, and pleading for this *pagan piety*, as preferable

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ferable to pure Religion and undefiled before God: And then under this maske of *morality*, and disguise of vertue, doth *Abaddon* muster all his several legions, and mannage his opposition against the Mediator, in the coming of his kingdome in the world, and conquering the souls of men. It is true, there may be some small differences betwixt his forces when gathered in the field, in their manner or method, and marke; some attacking the gospel in the very substance of it, with a flouting and fierce insolency, others with a subtle and snarkeing fullenness; but all of them concenter in the designe, and bewray such a keenness and diligence in driving it, as shoves both under whose banner they fight, and how true they are to their collours and Captain: herein *Papists*, *Pelagians*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and (the compound of all abominations) *Quakers* are unite. And truly if I might be heard, I would beseech also our *pepper corne men* to consider, how far the Adversary of mans salvation hath improved their assertions and concessions, and how much advantage the common enemies of the truth have got thereby!

Take notice therefore, I say, *Christians*, of this, being Satans main designe, and how and by whom it is mananged, lest yee be seduced into the same conspiracie; for many, who seemed to be of understanding, have fallen; and fallen, because they did not feare to fall: O beware, lest yee also being led away with the error of the wicked fall from your own stedfastness; but study to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savi-

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our (for there is none other name given under heaven, whereby men may be saved) Jesus Christ. I know, that every Reader and serious Christian, in order to his own establishment, is not able to purchase, nor is at leisure to peruse what Godly men have written for this end, and whose praise, because of their pains, is in the Church of Christ, such as that large discourse of learned and truly religious Doctor *Owen*, upon the Holy Spirit, wherein that worthy Author, as he hath given proof to the world of Christs being formed in him, and that his working, and walking, and witnessing to the truth, proceeds from the same noble principle, Christ dwelling in him, and walking in him; so he hath with a profound perspicuity, and convincing plainness, discovered the nature, pedigree, descent and tendency of this monster; and then, having discovered whence it came, and for what end, he hath given it a mortal blow, whereby he hath laid it all alongs, and left it sprawling and gnawing its tongue and gnashing its teeth: for which learned, elaborat and judicious discourse, as all the lovers of that truth, which is according to godlinesse, are obliged to blesse the Lord; so are they under the obligation of thankfulness to him; and by this I returne him my poor insignificant thanks, And I have the allowance of the Author, to do the same in his name.

But I would recommend to you, who can neither purchase nor peruse what is more voluminous (how worthy soever) the serious perusal, as of the whole of that savoury & grace-breathing peece. *The fulfilling of the Scriptures*; so therein that short

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short but sweet digression, against blake-mouthed *Parker*, wherein the gracious Author takes out his own soul, and sets before thine eye, the Image of God impressed thereon; for while he deals with that *Desperado* by clear and convincing reason, flowing natively from the pure fountain of divine revelation, he hath the advantage of most men, and writers too, in silencing that blasphemer of the good wayes of God. with arguments taken from what he hath found acted upon his own soul. And likewise I would recommend, as a soveraigne antidot against this poison, the diligent perusing, and pondering of what is shortly hinted against the hellish belchings of the same unhallowed Author, (in the preface to that piece of great Mr. *Durham*, upon the Commands) by a disciple, who, besides his natural acuteness and subactness of judgement in the depth of gospel mysteries, is known by all who know him (and for my self, I know none now alive his equal) to have most frequent access to lean his head on his Masters bosome, and so in best case to tell his fellow disciples and brethren, what is breathed into his own soul, while he lives in these embraces, and under the shedings abroad of that love of God in his soul, which drew, and did dictate these lines against that monster at all such frictions. Nor can I here omit to observe, how when the devil raised up *Parker*, that *Monster*, to barke and blaspheme, the Lord raised up a *Mervell* to fight him at his own weapon, who did so cudgel and quell that boasting *Bravo*, as I know not if he be dead of his wound, but for any thing I know, he hath laid his speech.

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But to close this short account of that new gospel, that other gospel introduced and obtruded upon us, with a foaming flourish of words; and to say it before thee, in its pure and perfect opposition to the gospel of the grace of God, take a short compend of it, in the words of one of its great patrons, they are set down in that new piece, called *Clausttrum anima* Pag. 114. where the Author having cited some scriptures, which do indeed press and perswade to the practice of pure religion and undefiled, lest his morality should suffer loss, and be found reprobate metal, if tried by such a touchstone, he guards his Reader from falling into such a mistake (a dangerous one it is indeed to his designe, for if thou fall in it thy soul is escaped out of his cloister, he loses his prey, and he will not be able to carry thee hood-winked to the pit) as if he meant or were pressing that holiness, which for its foundation hath peace with God through Christ Jesus, and for its working principle hath the life of God, whereby the dead is quickened, and for its progress the renewed influences of the Spirit: no, by no means, he clears himself that he is of a far other minde, and therefore to make his Reader of his minde too, he adds

Here is nothing to countenance these frightful fantastical pangs of the new birth, which proceed from Enthusiasme or Melancholy, nothing to countenance the fantastic applications of a borrowed rather snatch away righteousness: why not? The change (says he) that our religion requires, the scripture supposeth is in all that have embraced Christianity, Pag. 113, And again to the same purpose

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Pag. 114. in opposition to the new creature, which he mocks and murders, *the real change in our affections is supposed and recommended* (*Pelagius redivivus*) which is this upon the matter; it is frightful, fanatical melancholy, mad sangsy to talk and tell people of being borne againe, of quickening the dead: no, the soul is alive, it is not dead, it is but at worst a little drowsy or asleep; there needs no more but knock at the door, and the man will rise and run in the way of commanded duties, and acquire more liveliness and agility by a frequent and reiterated eduction of his innate power into act: let objective grace be but given (and to these great wits every stone and brute is a bible, on which they can read, what will regulat them in their walk; so that there is no simple necessity of the scriptures to them, for making them wise to salvation: these concur only ad *benefectum*, and are given *ex superabundante*); there is subjective grace enough; one needs not go without the powers of his own soul, to seek a sufficiency; he can will, and he can do, without a dependence upon any real life-giving power, or supervenient influence, working in him to will and do: And then, in opposition to that sanctified, borrowed and snatched away righteousness (to him an odde and new devised doctrine) do and live is substitute at the close of the Paragraph: and that to him is the only way, how the offered salvation is obtained.

Now Reader, if thou be not an utter stranger to the work of God upon the souls of his people, the poison dropped from this impure and impious pen, is so hell-blake and bitter, that it needs not

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my antidot; and it is so palpable and plain a perversion of the gospel, as will vindicate and acquite any thing, which hath been said of these perverters of the right wayes of the Lord, and layers of another foundation, besides Jesus Christ, from the imputation of severity. Christ had told us, that the way to heaven is strait and narrow, and few finde it; but out comes one out of the Cloister (I suspect hell is broke loose against us) and having laid aside Christ, who is the door, and the way, and the light, and the life, shoves us an easy, plaine and pleasant way to heaven.

Well, before thou follow such a guid, I desire thee to take notice, how well the all of what is contained in this cursed *claustrum*, doth agree unto, and is a just commentar upon what is prefixed in his *frontispiece*, wherein he hath Christ drawn upon the crosse, but not satisfied to crucify him *in effigie*, he, through the whole of his discourse, doth really crucify him againe, and put him to an open shame; the sense and soul of every line, as it lies in his book, & is levelled to his designe, is *away with him, away with him*, he calls him self the Lord our righteousness, take away that name from him, we owne him not, we acknowledge him not, as our righteousness, we will not beg nor borrow a robe from him, our owne mantle of *morality* must be to us, instead of this Mediator: and for the two theevs that must be crucified with him, the one is the *new birth*, the other is the *all* of that gospel obedience, performed by vertue of *supervenient influences*, communicat from that sole spring of spiritual life, Christ dwelling in the soul
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of the regenerat person ; two (in their account) as great thieves as ever run, for they have stole away *mistresse morality* her *plumash*, and stript her of her ornaments, so that it is impossible to hide the shame of her nakednesse but in their death, and for this must they be taken and crucified with their Master; that *morality*, having what these took from her restored, may bewitch the world with her beauty, and ravish them with her charmes. And for his title to his book, *The love of Jesus*, I judge, considering, how he explaines it in his book, and how true he is to his undertaking, this question is a suteable returne to it, *betrayest thou the son of man with a kisse?* O he is killing kind, it is not enough that he act *Pilas's* part, unlesse he act *Judas* his part also. But why did he not speake more modestly of the new birth, lest men should remember that it was *Jesus* his own doctrine? Why? (the man goes not mad without reason) *first* because in prejudice to *morality*, and its merite, he had delivered this doctrine with such a severe certification, that there is no seeing the kingdome of God without it. But *secondly* lest any thing of the solemnity, that attended the crucifixeing of Christ, should be wanting, after he hath nailed him upon the crosse, and thrust a speare in his side, falls a mocking, to encrease his pangs; for having taught so frightful, fanatical, enthusiastick and melancholy a doctrine, as the necessity of being in pangs of the new birth, if ever men would be in heaven.

However, I perceive some are now upon a reformation (good newes if true, for the world will beare them witness of its necessity.) But is this it?

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is this the mode of the Religion to be introduced with such a pomp and parade? Is this the reformation, that the reformed Church must be taken away and thrown down, to make way for the erection of this new *monastery*? Well, when it is built (which onely mercy can prevent) to give it its due, you see, lesse cannot be written over the poarch of this ædifice, if according to the paterne, then this; *The unclean spirit that was cast out, is returned, and hath taken possession, with seven devils worse then himself.*

Now while Satan drags most men with their own consent, thorow the puddle of grosse profanity, & these swine, swallowed up in sensuality, run as he drives (being led captive of him at his pleasure) without all dread of being drowned in the lake, where he will land them. And while he besots the soaring witts of the age, into a slighting and setting at naught the glorious Saviour, with that invaluable and precious salvation, which he brings to poor self destroyed sinners; some few there are, whom he will not want, and whom he will not suffer to wander from the refuge and resting place of souls, and whom he will not suffer to rest satisfied while they want him; these he delivers from the imposings of Satan, and the betrayings of their own deceitful and desperately wicked heart, by opening their eyes, so that they are made to approve the things, which are more excellent, being taught of God, and are prevailed with, through the efficacious perswasions of that grace, which will take no refusal from some, to subject their consent unto the gospel. But Alas! even many of these, into whose

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Soul the light hath shined, and who have a living principle implanted in them, which will spring up into everlasting life; (and therefore cannot misse of the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls) yet how busy is Satan, and how doth he hang upon their working hand, so that the good which they would that they do not; and in this he hath the concurrence of that law, which is in their members, carrying them impetuously to do what they would not, and captivating them unto that law of sin, which is in their members? How often Alas! are they engaged by the sly suggestions of Satan, and specious solicitations of their own hearts, into things unworthy of their high and holy calling; so that however grace, which prevented them at first, will also release them at last; yet by their untender way and walk, as they rob God of the glory of his grace, in not shewing forth his virtues in all things, they also deprive themselves of the comfort thereof, through their uncircumspect walking, and of that sweet inward serenity of minde, and unspeakable joy, which is to be had in fellowship with him; and in the end must suffer loss, by heaving their works burnt, and they themselves but almost, yea scarcely saved; saved they must be (because on the foundation) yet so as by fire; while the tender Christian, who exerciseth himself to godliness, hath a sweet life, his heaven is serene and cleare, his study to purge his heart from corruption and cleanse his hands in innocency, keeps his interest unclouded; his care not to grieve the Spirit in his workings, delivers him from the grief, flowing from the Spirits ceasing to witnesse; he so thinks

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on whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, as to do them, knowing this is the way to have that peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to guard his heart and mind through Christ Jesus: he who hath a conversation in heaven, cannot want a comfort of sweet musick in his own soul. O what melody must it make in the soul, how sweet must the chirpings and chimings of such a bird be singing in the bosome, as the testimony of a mans conscience, that in simplicity and Godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God (O mark how the crown of his gloriation and gladness is put upon grace's head!) he hath his conversation in the world; and then when he hath served his generation thus, according to the will of God, having made it his work, as one made partaker of the divine nature, to adde one grace to another, he enters his harbour (O glorious landing, where God is seen, and glory dwells!) with a roome sea, and a porting winde: for says the Holy Ghost, *an enterance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdome of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ*: whereas the man, whose work it hath not been, so to walk as he might adorne the doctrine of God the saviour, in all things, & hold forth in his way the word of life, dies often in the dark, because he did not walk as become a child of light: & though that God, whose gifts & calling are without repentance, may save him; yet his glory may require it, to withhold from him the testimony of

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of the Spirit, which is by water, and never, while he is in this world, either let himself or others wit of it, nay not onely so, but he may go off the stage with horreur, and go out of this life under the terrors of God; for, though the Spirit of God being the spirit of truth will never alter the word that is gone out of his mouth; and once having said, thou art a son, and in a gracious state, will never againe say, thou art no son, and thy grace is no grace; but yet, when his conscience awaks upon him, and aggravats his guilt, from what he had formerly been helped to do, and stings him till he roar by reason of the disquietnesse of his heart, and all his evidences for heaven are so blurred, (though not deleted) as there is not one legible letter in them, he cannot say, when he is just laying speech, that he hath one taken for good; and in this mist, the sincerity and reality of the whole may not onely be questioned, but denied. The Spirit, I say, though once having wrought the good work, and translated the soul out of a state of bondage into a state of glorious liberty, will never againe deny his owne work; yet may he stand by silent, and say nothing, and see the poor man, whom he will save for all this (as a just punishment for his untenderness, and that all, who heare or look on, may learne to walk more circumspectly, and take heed of grieving the Spirit, whereby they are sealed) expire under these pangs, throwes, tossings, terrors, affrightments, and soul-distracting feares, wherewith he was filled and overwhelmed, under the first workings of the Spirit of bondage.

But besides these, a little lovely flock there is, a few

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few number, who through grace obtaine mercy to walk, as *bateing the garment spotted with the flesh*; they make Religion their businesse; it is their one thing, to *abstaine from all appearance of evil*; and to *exercise themselves to godlinesse*; by the circumspection of their walking, it is evident, they are upon their watch, and make it their work, not onely to keep their heart with all keeping, but so to keep themselves in their converseings in the world, amidst a croud of snares, and throng of tentations, as that evil one touch them not: they carry as knowing that Satan, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, way-layes them, and watches to catch all advantages against them; and therefore as not ignorant of his devices, they study sobriety and vigilancy, lest through a secure incircumspection they be circumvented, and give him the advantage he seeks; and so beare the marke of his blake hand: yea some of these, at some rare times, do not onely satisfy themselves to carry as defendants, but are helped to such a heroick heavenly and Christ-like resistance, as to make Satan flee from them; and when they, through him who strengtheneth them unto the battal, (and will at last once for all and for ever tread Satan under their feet, and make the weakest wrigling, that ever gave up their names to the Captain of Salvation, set their feeble feet as more than conquerours upon the neck of the great red dragon, and off his neck, to his everlasting confusion, mount up in their triumphing charriot, and receive the conquerours crown) have acquit themselves, as the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, not onely in warding off the
blowes

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blowes of that soul enemy, but in managing the sword of the Spirit, and the sheild of faith, so in the conflict, as they make the enemy, who stretched out the hand to strick at them, take in a stump, they then pursue their victory, on purpose to set the crown on the Captains head, through whose strength alone they gained it. But Alas! even amongst this select number, these more serious souls and single servants of God, how few do improve, as they ought and might, that strength and help, which is their allowance, and whereby they might be made strong for the labour of Religion? How many, of these few followers after holinesse, do move slowly, and promote little? They cannot give over the study of holinesse, (their heart being engaged to God and his wayes, beyond a retreat) but how heartlesse and handlesse are they at their work? They tugge at duty, and tire themselves in the wayes of God, without any seen successe, or experienceng the sweet of his service; their profit- ing doth not appeare to all, which, as it is their sin, is also attended with shame and sorrow: yea, they carry so despondently in duty, as if the gospel required brick without furnishing straw, whereas if they took the right way, they might walk without wearying; even the faint, and they who have no might, if they knew, and had learned how to lay their help upon him, who is mighty, where God hath laid it, should finde their strength encreased, to a surmounting of all difficulties, and an experienceng of a sweet facility in the wayes of God, so that in stead of whining and sobing over their duty, of which they are often found as

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an enemy, and sinking under a hand . weakening despondency, they might sing in the sweet, pleasant and plain wayes of holinesse, they might make his statutes their songs in the house of their pilgrimage, and be able from their own experience to say it and seal it, that *his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.*

Now, that the lesse tender, in whom the root of the matter is, may be perswaded and provoked to a shining seriousness, to the adorning of that doctrine of God, the Saviour, which they profess: And they whose souls are not onely byassed towards the wayes of God, but have some holy habitual bentness heaven-wards, and it is their burden that the whole of their course doth not evidence a conversation in heaven: To the end, I say, that both may not onely be prevailed with, to study more conformity to the Head, whose members they are; and have a conversation such as becometh the gospel indeed; but may through grace acquire a blessed facility in *going from strength to strength*, and growing *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, this ensuing *Treasure* is put in thy hand, that *thy heart may be lift up, in the waves of the Lord*, wherein the *Author* hath, with a peculiar perspicuity and special plainness, not onely set before thine eye that blessed Sun of righteousness, as shining in this gospel with a meridian brightness, to the irradiating, with the rayes of his glorious light, the darkened soul; & likewise thou hast him not onely here held forth as that alone living fountaine and overflowing spring of all spiritual life and strength. But he hath taught thee

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thee and me, how to make use of him, in whom dwells the fulnesse of the God head bodily, in all the severall steps of darkenesse or difficulty, which may emerge and occurre, to the fore-slowing us in our course of Christianity, so as we may finde a compleatnesse and competency of strength communicat unto us. That blessed high way, called the way of holinesse, is made so plaine herein, that the way-faring man cannot erre in it, because it shewes how to give the hand to God, as a guide to Jesus Christ, that blessed leader, who brings the blind by a way that they know not, and leads them in paths that they have not knowen, who makes darkenesse light before them, and crooked things straight: And the apparently rough and rigid wayes of godlinesse are discovered to be so ealy and sweet, that the lame may leap as an hart, because of life-giving influence; and the tongue of the dumb or disconsolate Christian may sing, under these gracious supporting, and say, his wayes are indeed wayes of pleasantnesse.

It was not the *Authors* designe in this peece, (levelled onely at this marke, to teach thee how to make use of the strength and grace, that is in Christ Jesus, and finde the promised ease in performance of duties; in handling of which argument, he hath been remarkably assisted; and thou canst not read with attention, but thou must beare him witness, and bless the Lord on his behalfe, that he hath hit the marke at which he aimed.) to engage in a formal debate with these audacious moralists, who would boast and boyle us out of the good old way: wherein if men walk they must finde rest to their souls:

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yet if by the doctrine he hath here explained and pressed, as the onely way of life, they do not finde what a mortal wound he hath given their morality, all the lovers of the truth will see it; and it may be, the Lord sparing life, and continuing the same gracious and great assistance, he hath had in engaging with many great adversaries to the truth at home & a broad, they may see somewhat from his pen, which may make the lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and of the operations of his Spirit, sing over these successors to *Sisera*, who with their jumping charriots and rattling wheels assault the truth, *at his feet they bowed, they fell, they lay down at his feet, they bowed, they fell where they bowed, there they fell down dead; so let all the enemies of thy truth perish, O Lord.* How to make the whole more useful for thee, for whose advantage its mainly intended, I leave to the *Author's* own direction; onely this I must say, his method and mould; wherein he casts this sweet matter; and his way of handling this so seasonable a subject, is so accommodat to each case, and brought home to the conscience, and down to the capacity of the meanest Christian, which was his aim, that the feeble, in this day, *might be as David*; that howbeit many worthy men have not onely hinted, but enlarged upon the same matter, yet thou canst not but see some heart-endearing singularity in his way of improving and handling this great gospel truth. Next I must tell thee, that as I my self read it with much satisfaction (though Alas! I dur not say, I have by reading reaped the designed advantage so that thou mayest be blushed into a

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peruseal thereof, and profiting thereby; I must likewise tell thee, I say, it hath been turned into dutch, and that it hath not onely met with great acception, amongst all the serious and Godly in these parts, who have seen it; but is much sought after; and they professe themselves singularly thereby edified, and set a going after God, by its efficacious perswasivenesse, with a singing alacrity; and if it have not the same effect upon thee and me, they, and it will rise up against us in judgment.

Up therefore, *Christians*, and be doing: listen to such a teacher, who, lest thou tire in thy race or turne bake, teacheth thee a certaine and sweet way of singular proficiency and progresse in the wayes of God. It may be, it is not thy work, nor mine, to writ books against these soul murdering, however magnified, methods of taking men off Jesus Christ, but our penury of parts for that, should (1.) Put us to seek plenty of teares, that we may weep, to see our Master so wounded, by the piercing pens of those, who, to patronize their mock religion, wrest the Scriptures, and with wicked hands wring the word of the Lord, till it weep blood: this, I say, should provoke thee and me to weep upon Him, till He appeare, and beat the pens of such deceivers out of their hand by a blow of his. (2.) It should provoke us to know the truth, that we may contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints, and to have these contradicted truths so impressed in their life upon our souls, that the pen of the most subtile pleader, for this perversion of the gospel, may neither delete these, nor be able to stagger us, but we may from the efficacious workings of these, have the witness

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in ourselves, and know the men who teach other
 wayes not to be of God. (3.) It should be our
 ambition, when the all of religion is cryed down
 and a *painted shadow*, a *putrid* (however perfume
 ed) *nothing* put in its place, to make it ap
 pear by our practise, that Religion is an elevation
 of the soul above the sphere and activity of *dead mor
 tality*; and that it is no lesse or lower principle that
 acts us, than Christ dwelling in us, and walking
 in us: how can the love of God, & of Christ, & of the
 Spirit be in us, if these perverse pratters against the
 power of godlinesse, provoke us not to emit a pra
 ctical declaration to the world, & extort a Testimonie
 to his grace by our way, from the enemies thereof.
 Improve therefore this his special help to that pur
 pose, which in a most seasonable time is brought
 to thy hand.

But to sum up all shortly, there are but three
 things which make religion an heavy burden. *Fir
 st*, the blindness of the minde; & here thou art taught
 to make use of that eye-salve, whereby *the eyes of
 the blind see out of obscurity and out of darkenesse*
 who formerly erred in Spirit, by the light held
 forth in these lines, may see a surpassing beauty
 in the wayes of God. *Secondly*, That aversion and
 unwillingnesse, which is in the minde, whereby
 the sweet & easy yoke of his commands is spurned at
 as heavy, in order to the removing thereof; & that
 thou mayest be among his willing people, here
 thou hast Christ held forth in his conquering beau
 ty, displaying his banner of love over souls, so that
 thou canst not look upon him as held forth, but
 such will bow thy neck to take on his yoke, because

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it sees it is lined with the love of Christ, & then this love, that line the yoke, shed abroad in the heart, will constrain to a bearing of it. O it must be an easy yoke, because it is love, tender love, that imposeth it; and it must be easy & delightful to the bearer, because it is the nature of love to think the greatest difficulties easy, if thereby an evidence of loves reality may be given to the party beloved: now, if Christ thought the greatest burden easy, even that which with its weight wrung these words from him, *now is my soul troubled*, &c. to persuade souls of the reality and riches of his love to them; Then the soul can think nothing heavy that he imposeth, since he will interpret the bearing of it an evidence of his love to him: none of his commandments can be grievous to the man now, since he hath said, *This is the love of God, that ye keep his commandments*. Now there is a readinesse of minde to do all things without disputings & murmurings; as love knowes no lyon in its way, so it is no murmuring disputant; when this question is cleared, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*, then love hath no more questions; its greatest difficulty is solved. But *Thirdly* when the Spirit is willing, there remains yet much weaknesse, love kindled in the heart conquers the mind into a complianee with his will, and a complacency in his commands, but its greatest strength is often to weep over a withered hand: now that thy hands which fall down may be made strong for labour, and thou mayest be girded with strength, and have grace for grace, yea all grace, to make thee abound unto every good word and work; The *Author* leads thee up

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unto the full fountaine of all Gospel furniture, and strength, and teacheth thee how to make use of Jesus Christ, as thy sufficiency, for working all thy works in thee, and for thee. Take heart therefore unto thee: when thy looking unto duty may make thee despair of performance, lift up thine eyes to him, who is here set before thee; look till every new look upward bring light and life inward, and capacitate thee for making a new house forward, in the power of his might: he was but a wicked servant, who said, *I am then art a hard master*: No, it is false. That religion which gives ease must be an easy religion, and truly such a Gospel holiness, not only in regard that it is the liberation of the soul from the basest bondage, but in regard that he who is thy Master will be served of his own will: the allowed supplies for all compounded duties are full measure, heaped up, shaken together, and running over. And though he who hath much hath nothing over, yet he who hath little hath no mistake, for he abounds towards us in wisdom. I say therefore againe unto thee, take heart: let not thine hands fall down, essay nothing thou wilt have well done or easily done, in thine own strength; but yet how difficult so ever the duty be, approach it as having no confidence in the flesh, but with an eye to thy Rock, what rich store house of all furniture, and it shall be with thee, as it was with the priests, before whom Jordan recoiled, so soon as their foot entered within the brink, God shall make thy difficulties vanish; and by the blessing of the Spirit of power and might, from Jesus Christ depending upon, shall so strengthen thee, that thy duty is made easy to admiration, and becomes the delight of thy soul. I have exceeded the just limits of an Epistle: pray for the continuance of the life of the Author, who by his assiduous writing for Christ, hath been often near unto death, and regarding his own life, to supply the lack of other mans service, to the interest & Church of God, & let him be comforted for this piece of travel, undertaken for thy soul's interest, by hearing thou dost improve it to thy advantage, for which it is exactly calculat: And withall I beg thy fervent & earnest intercessions for grace, & more grace, to him who is

*Thy pain, yet souls well wisher and servant
for Christ's sake. R. Mc. W.*

The Author to the Reader.

Christian Reader,



Essex the foregoing address, I need not put thee to much more trouble: only I shall say; That he must needs be a great stranger in our Israel, or sadly smitten with that epidemick plague of indifferency, which hath infected many of this Generation, to a benumbing of them, and rendering them insensible; and unconcerned, in the matters of God, and of their own souls; and sunck deep into the gulf of dreadful inconsideration, who seeth not, or taketh no notice of, nor is troubled at the manifest and terrible appearances of the unexpressibly great hazard, our all, as Christians, in this life, is this day into. I mean the mystery of the Gospel of the grace of God, wherein the exceeding riches of His grace, in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus, hath been shouned: We have enjoyed, for a considerable time, a clear and powerful dispensation hereof, in great purity and plenty; but Alas! it is not

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manifest to all, that will not wilfully shut their eyes, that this Mercy, and Goodness of God, hath been wickedly abused, and the pure administration of His Grace & Love perfidiously sinned away, by this Apostate Generation? Are our spots this day the spots of his children? Are there fruits answerable to the Lord's paines and labour about us, to be seen even among the greatest of Professours? Is there that gospel holiness, tenderness, watchfulness, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that growing up in Christ, in all things, that heavenly mindedness, that fellowship with the Father and with his Son Christ Iesus, and that conversation in heaven, that the dispensation of grace, we have been favoured with beyond many, and have been long living under, did call for at our hands? Alas! our grapes are but wilde and stincking. Wherefore (and who can think it strange, if it be so?) the Lord seemeth to be about to contend with us, by covering our horizon with Egyptian darkness, many, who would not receive the love of the Truth, that they might be saved, being already given up to strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, and many

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more in hazard to be drawn aside to crooked pathes, by men of corrupt mindes, who have been, and are still busie to vent and spread abroad, with no little petulancy and confidence, damnable doctrines, to the perverting of the doctrine of the Gospel of Iesus Christ, and to the subverting and overturning of the very foundations of our Hope & Assurance; and that in such a way, and by such meanes and stratagems, as seem to have wrath written upon them, in legible letters; for the more plausible and taking a corrupt doctrine be, it is the more dangerous, & judgement-like, and more are thereby in hazard to be deluded and drawn away.

Nay (which is yet more terrible and dreadful) it is to be feared, that the jealous God, in his holy and righteous judgment, hath given a providential commission (to speak so) unto the seduceing Spirit, to perswade and prevail: for is not this the clear language of the present holy and righteous dispensations of God, and of the stupenduously indifferent frame and disposition of the generality of men, called Christians, not only provoking God to spew them out of his mouth, but disposing them also unto a receiving of whatsoever

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men lying in waite to deceive, shall pro-
pose and obtrude?

Alas! the clouds are not now a gathering,
but our horizon is covered over with blackness,
and great drops are a falling, that presage a ter-
rible overflowing deluge of error, and
Apostasie from the Truth and Profession
of the Gospel of Iesus Christ, to be at hand,
if the Lord wonderfully prevent it not. And
behold (O wonderful!) the generality of Pro-
fessours are sleeping in security, apprehending no
danger. Satan is more cunning now, than to
drive men to Popery by rage and cruelty (and
yet what he may be permitted to do after this
manner, who can tell?) or by openly pleading
in his emissaries, for this abomination, (and
yet even thus is he already prevailing with not a
few) or to send forth his agents for Armini-
anism and Socinianism (though even this
way too, he is too much prevailing.) But his
maine work now seemeth to be, to bring in a
nother Gospel, (and yet there is not ano-
ther) or rather an Antievangelicke and An-
tichristian delusory dream, overturning at
once the whole Gospel of our Lord and Sa-
viour Iesus Christ; and for this end he em-
ployeth the Quakers, one the one hand, Men

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of desperat and antievangelick principles, the very sinke of all abominations, old and late (as I shall show, if the Lord will continue health and strength, in an examination of their doctrine and principles, lately emitted by one Robert Barclay) and on the other hand, Men (or Moralists if you will call them so) pleading for and crying up an antievangelick holiness, a meer shadow without substance or reality; and that in place of Christ himself; And in order to the carrying on of this desperat designe, The old dragon is employing men of seeming different principles and wayes, whom, though their faces seem to look to contrary sides, yet be holdeth notwithstanding fast by their tails (as Samson's foxes were) that thereby, if the Lord permit it, he may by the life of enmity to the pure Gospel of the grace of God, burning in their tails, cause a conflagration of that Truth, wherein lyeth all our hope: for this new model of Religion, that many are so busied about, is such as Pelagians, Arminians, Papists, Socinians, Quakers, yea Turks, and moral Heathens; Yea and all, who are enemies to, and not reconcileable with the true grace of God held forth in the Gospel, will willingly

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admit of, and harmoniously agree in: A way, which complyeth so well with proud self, and with the Corrupt Nature of Man, that it is little wonder, if it have many abettors and admirers. I shall say no more of this, seeing my beloved Brother hath said so much as is already to very good purpose, in the foregoing Epistle; but only inferre,

That sure the consideration of this should move all, in whom is any thing of the zeal of God, and love to souls, their owne and others, to appear in the defence of the Gospel of our Salvation, by all meanes, incumbent to them, and possible for them: for if this Citadel, & strong hold, wherein our All, and the all of pure and true Religion, lyeth, be blown up, we are gone; and indeed no less is intended by this Antichristian and antievangelick enemy, than the utter subversion of True Christian Religion. VVho would not then be hereby alarmed, and upon their guard, when matters are at this passe? Should not all, vvho have any love to their ovvn souls, any zeal for the glory of Christ, anointed of the Father to be our Prophet, Priest, & King; any desire to see the crown flourishing upon his Head, and to have the Gospel preserved pure

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pure and uncorrupted, be pleading with
God by prayer, in the behalfe of His Son's
Kingdom, Crown, and Glory; and
wrestling with Him, till He were pleased to
dispell these clouds, & prevent this blake day:
Especially, should they not be labouring to be
acquainted, in truth and reality, with the
Gospel of Iesus Christ, that having the my-
sterious truths thereof imprinted on their
souls, and their hearts cast into its mould,
they may be preserved from the hurt of this
deadly poison: for this, with a constant
dependance upon, and use making of Christ
in all His offices, will prove the best preserva-
tive against this infection.

The perswasion whereof did induce me to
publish the following heads of some sermons,
after they had been translated into dutch, and
published here; knowing that they might be
of no lesse use to the people of God, in Britaine
and Ireland. I know not a more effectual
mean to keep unstable soules from sliding
up and embracing every new notion; &
from being carryed about with every winde
of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and
cunning craftines, whereby they lye in
waite to deceive; than to put them upon the

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Real exercise of Gospel godliness, and to the daily practice of the maine and fundamental gospel work, of living by faith in Jesus Christ and of growing up into Him, in all things, who is the Head, from whom the whole body fitly joyned together and compacted, by that which every joynt supplyeth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of it self in love. Such, I am sure, as have thus learned the Truth, as it is in Jesus, and are practising the same accordingly, will have an Antidot within them against the strongest poison of these Seducers; and a real answer to, and confutation of all their subtile sophismes. The soul exercising it self unto Gospel godliness, will finde work enough to take it wholly up; and finde such a solide ground to stand upon; and see such a satisfying fulness, answering all its necessities and wants, & such a sure heart-quieting ground of Peace, Hope and Consolation, in Jesus Christ, as that it will have no leasure, and small temptation to listen to Seducing perverters, and no inclination to seek after empty Cisterns.

I know

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I know much may be desiderated, in this following Treatise, and many may have exceptions, not without ground, against it: Some may think it arrogancy and too great confidence in me, to attempt the handling of such a mysterious & necessary part of Christian practice, wherein few, (if any so far as I know) have gone before, in direct handling of this matter, at least in this methode & order; I meane that part, which is about Sanctification: others may be displeased with the meane & low stile; with my multiplying of particulars, which might have been better & more handsomly couched under fewer heads; and with my unnecessary contracting of the whole, into such narrow bounds; and other things of that kinde: for which & many other failings of the like nature & import, which may without any diligent search, be found in it, even by ordinary & unprejudiced Readers, I shall not industriously labour to apologize, knowing that my very apology, in this case, will need an apology: Only I shall say this, That considering how the snare, which the vigilant & active enemy of our Salvation, the Devil, was laying, by an unholy morality, did nearly

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concerne all, & especially the meanest (for parts & experience) and less fixed Christians, I thought a discourse on such a subject, as I judged most necessary at all times, & especially in such a day of hazard, should be framed to the capacity of one, as well as another; the most understanding can receive benefit, by that which is calculat to the capacity of children, when these can reap little edification by what is suited to the palate of those: & the less experienced, or such as are of slower understanding, will be less able to draw a General to a Particular; or to improve, & so fully to comprehend one particular touched, as to be able thereby to understand, & take in a like particular, not mentioned; than such, as have their senses more exercised, and are thereby in case to make a better improvement of what is but compendiously declared, when those must have the bread broken to their hand, or they shall receive but small edification thereby: and yet, I suppose, the judicious will observe some variety, smaller or greater, even where Particulars seem to be, at the first view, most unnecessarily multiplied. I know, and willingly grant (for its obvious enough) that a discourse of this
Subject

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Subject and matter, might have required a far larger volume; But then how should such have profited thereby, whom Poverty might possibly have scarred from buying; or the necessary affaires of their ordinary callings would have keeped from a diligent perusal of it? And I thought, that neither of these should have been overlooked, in this special, or general designe, which I had before mine eyes.

One thing, as my answer to all, I shall but add: If hereby Others, whom the Lord hath more enabled with all necessities for such a work, shall be hereby either instigated, or encouraged, to write upon this Subject (I meane mainly the last part thereof, touching the usemaking of Christ, in Sanctification; for, blessed be the Lord, many have been employed of the Lord to speak soundly and edifyingly, unto the usemaking of Christ as to Righteousness and Justification) and give a Full, Plaine, Edifying and Satisfying discovery of this Necessary & Important Truth, viz. Christ made of God to us Wisdome, Righteousness, Sanctification & Redemption: and withall Point out plainly & particularty the way, how Believers,

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leavers, in all their Particular and various exigencies, may and should so make use of, and apply that all fulness, which is treasured up in the Head, for the benefit and advantage of the Members of the Mystical body, as they may not only theoretically see, but practically also experience this truth. That in Him they are compleat; and so they may be helped to understand how, through the necessary & constant use making of Him, as all in all, they may grow up in Him, in all things: If this be, I say, done by any, to better purpose, I shall think this my adventure not altogether fruitless, & in part, at least, excusable.

As for thee, O Christian, whose instruction, edification and confirmation in the Faith of our Lord Iesus Christ, the Gospel which was once delivered unto the Saints, I mainly intended in this undertaking, I have a few things to adde: know then that there are certain men (as the Apostle Iude speaketh) crept in unawares, who were of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Iesus Christ for these

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these last dayes, we see that these perillous times are come, (of which Paul advertised Timothy, 2 Tim. 3: 1. &c.) wherein men shall be lovers of their owne selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, (or make bates) ingcontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitours, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having the forme of godliness, but denying the power thereof — for of this sort are they, which creep into houses, & lead captive silly women, laden with sinnes, led away with diverse lusts, ever learning, & never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: And because it is so; be exhorted to give diligence to make your Calling & Election sure, by giving all diligence to adde to faith vertue; to vertue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. As the Apostle Peter

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assureth us, 2 Pet. 1: 5, 6, 7, 10. for it is the Elect, vvhho are secured from full and final defection and Apostasie, Mat. 24: 24. Mark. 13: 22. Rom. 11: 5, 7. & 9: 11. & 8: 33. Mat. 24: 31. Mark. 13: 27. and the promise of Salvation is made to such, as shall endure to the end. The Crown is for the Overcomers, & such as are faithful to the death, Mat. 10: 22. & 24: 13. Mark. 13: 13. Revel. 2: 10, 11, 17, 26, 27, 28. & 3: 5, 12, 21. All vvhich, and the like, are set downe, that hereby his people might be rationally moved to a constant seriousness, in the working out of their owne Salvation, in fear & trembling; and the forewarnings given of the great difficulty, of reaching the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls, because of the many Active, Vigilant, Indefatigable, Subtile, and Insinuating adversaries, who by good words & faire speeches, vvhich readily deceive the hearts of the simple, are to awaken the more His people to be sober & vigilant, because their Adversary, the Devil, who acteth and moveth his under-agents, in their severall Modes, Methods and Motions, so as he may best, according to the various Tempers, Present Dispositions, Advantages

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ges or Disadvantages of such, as he intendeth to seduce, vvhich he carefully studyeth, and plyeth for this end, obtaine his designed end, their ruine and destruction) as a roaring lyon, walking about seeking whom he may deuoure. And this calleth them to haste out of their slumber and security, lest their Adversary, who will be loath to misse his Opportunity, surprize them, to their great losse and disadvantage.

It is, Beloved, high time now to awake, so look about us, to consider where we are, upon vvhhat ground vve stand, vvhether the Enemy or we have the advantage; how and in vvhhat Postour vve are, to rancontre with deceivers, that seek to cheate us of all, of our souls, and of our salvation, because they vould cheate us of the Lord our Righteousness, and drayv us off the pathes of life, that vwhen vve come to die (beside the unspeakable great losse vve vould thereby be at, even here, in missing the comfortable accessies to God, through Iesus Christ, the inflowings of grace & strength for spiritual duty, through the Lord our Strength; the sweet communications of peace and joy in the holy Ghost; the sheddings abroad of the love of God in our hearts, by the holy Ghost,

which

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which is given unto us, and the full assurance of hope, through the Lord Iesus our hope) we might be frustrated of all our expectations, and finde that all that, which Men made us grip to, lay hold on, and leane unto, in stead of Christ, was but a meer shadow, and a lie in our right hand, to the unexpressible griefe, vexation and sorrow of soul, when all should end in a dreadful and horrible disappointment.

But let us not think, that our Purposes, firme-like Resolutions, to adhere to the Truth, and our present Abhorrence at, and Detestation of errors now broached, to the overturning of the very foundations of true Christianity, will sufficiently guard us from, and make us proof against the shames and assaults of these crafty seducers: Nor think, that our learning and knowledge in the Theory of the Truth; nor our Abilities to ranconne Sophisters, will secure us from a fall: let us not think that the Enemies are contemptible, and therefore we need be the less anxious; nor yet think that former experiences & through-bearings, in the like cases, will be a pillow, whereupon we may now lay our selves downe to sleep: If we do, we shall cer-

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Canely deceive ourselves, if all our strength & standing be in ourselves, and through ourselves, and if this be the ground of our hopes, the Righteous Lord, in his holy justice, may give us up to be a Prey: Peters instance should never be forgotten by us: and such as tempt the Lord have no ground to expect his last issue.

Our strength must be in Christ: to the rock of ages must we flee: to our chambers in Him must we retire, and there must we hide ourselves: on Christs lee side can we only hide safe, and be free of the hazards of the storme. To Him therefore must we recourse be daily, by new & fresh acts of Faith. In and through Him and His Influences, communicated according to the tenor of the Covenant of grace, through Faith euening the Promiser, the Promise, with the Price purchasing, and so drawing and taking Light, Direction, Strength, Stability, and what our present exigent calleth for, must we thank to stand: and happy they, who conscious to themselves of their own weakness and convinced of the insufficiency of all things within them, in Godly fear hide themselves under the wings of the Almighty, and in into this Strong hold, resolving there

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abide, and there to be secured from all their Adversaries, within, or without: These humble fearers may expect a saife & noble outgate; when more strong-like & more confident adventurers, shall (being left to themselves, because trusting in themselves) shamefully fall, and be triumphed over by the Enemie, to the grieve of the Godly, and for a snare to others.

The best way then, to keep the faith of Christ, which many are now seeking to shake, and to loose us from, is to be exerciseing the faith of Christ. The serious and upright practiseing of the Gospell is the only best mean to keep thee firme in the profession of the Gospel: when the Gospel with thee, is not a few fine notions in the braine; but is heavenly and necessary Truth sunck into the heart, and living and acting there; it will keep thee, and thou wilt owne it, more firmly and steadfastly, in a day of tryal. Thy walking in Christ, and working and living, by Him living in thee, will so root thee in the Gospel truth, that enemies will pull in vaine, when seeking to overthrow thee. The Gospel of the grace of God, received and entertained in thy soule in love, and con-

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stant *sutable* *improvement*, will fortifie thee, and secure it self in thee, so that vehement blasts shall but contribute to its more fixed abode, and more fruitful actings in thee. Live up then to the Gospel, and so be sure of it, and be saife in it. I mean, let Christ live in thee, as thy all, and cast all thy care and cumber on Him; lay all thy difficulties before Him; lean all thy weight upon Him; draw all thy necessities out of Him; undertake all thy duties in Him; be strong in Him, and in the power of His might; let Him by thy Counselor, Conductor, Leader, Teacher, Captain, Commander, Light, Life, Strength and all, so shall thou stand, and have cause to glory, even in thy infirmities, for thou shalt finde the power of Christ resting upon thee, and thou shalt have cause to say, Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong: Remember that great word, Phil. 4: 13. I can do all things, through Christ, which strengtheneth me.

It hath bin the usual and ordinary question of Believers; How shall we make use of Christ for Sanctification. To this great and important question; I, (though the meanest and most unfit for such a work, of all that God hath sent to feed his flock) have adventured or endeavoured, at least, to give such as truly desire to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, some
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satisfaction herein, laying before them, some plaine directions, framed to their capacities, and suited to some of their most ordinary and usual cases, some whereof are more comprehensive; & others more particular, may be looked upon as exemplary instances, serving for other cases of the like nature; for hardly could every particular circumstance at case be particularly spoken to, and some might judge that to be superfluous. If thou, in the light & strength of Christ, shalt really practise what is here pointed forth, I may be confident to say, thy labour shall not be in vaine in the Lord, & thou shalt attaine to another sort of holiness, than that, which Proud pretenders boast of; & shalt be far without the reach of that snare, which unstable souls are too readily entangled with. I mean, the plausible pretension of more than ordinary sanctity, which yet is but forced, feigned, constrained, mostly external, & framed to cause some admiration in beholders, whom they intend to make a prey of. This shall be no temptation to thee, who by experience findeth a more saife, satisfying, full, free, easy, pleasant & heartsome way of mortifying lusts, growing in grace; & in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, & so perfecting holiness, by running immediately to Christ, & by living in & upon Him, who is made of God to us, Wisdom, Righteousnes, Sanctification & Redemption. That the Lord may blesse the same to thee, for this end, shall be and is the desire and prayer of Him, who is thy servant, in the work of the Gospel.

I. B.

CHRIST.

The Way, the Truth, & the Life.

Or
A discovery of the right way of making use of
Christ, for Sanctification:

From

JOHN. XIV. 6.

Iesus sayeth unto them, I am the Way, & the Truth,
& the Life; No man cometh unto the
Father but by Me.

CHAP. I.

The introduction, with some generall obser-
vations from the cohesion.



Doublelesse it is alwayes usefull,
yea necessary, for the children
of God, to know the right
way of making use of Christ,
who is made all things to
them which they need, even
Wisdom, Righteousnesse,
Sanctification, and Redemp-
tion. 1 Cor. 1:30. But it is never more necessarie
for beleevers to be cleare & distinct in this matter,
than when Satan by all meanes is seeking to per-
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vert the right wayes of the Lord ; and one way or other to lead souls away , and draw them off Christ ; knowing that if he prevail here , he hath gained his poynt : and therefore he endeavoureth not only to darken it by error, either more grosse, or more subtle ; but also to darken it by mistakes , and prejudices ; whence it cometh to passe , that not only Strangers are made to wander out of the way , but oftentimes many of his owne people are walking in the darknesse of ignorance and mistakes , and remaine leane through want of the reall exercise of the Life of faith , which would make them fat & flourishing ; because it would make them *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and to grow up in Christ in all things.*

The clearing up then of this truth cannot but be most seasonable now, when Satan is prevailing with many , whom he cannot get tempted to loosenesse and profanitie , to sit downe upon some thing , which is not Christ ; and to rest upon something within themselves , distinct from him , both in the matter of *Iustification* , and *Sanctification*. This subtle Adversary is now setting some a work , to cry up , by preaching , speaking and printing , a way to heaven , which is not Christ , a kinde of *moralities* , civility and outward holinesse , whereupon the soul is to rest : and this holinesse , not wrought and effectuated through the strength of Jesus , by faith sucking life and furniture from him ; but through our owne art and skill ; which in effect is nothing but an extract of refined *Papery* , *Socinianisme* , and *Arminianisme* , devised
and

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and broached of purpose, to draw the soul off Christ; that he may stand upon his owne legs, and walk by his owne power, and thank himself, at least in part, for the crown, at length.

Further, through the great goodnesse of God, the true way of a soul's justification is admirable cleared up; and many are, at least *theoretically*, acquainted therewith; and many also *practically*, to the quieting of their wakened consciences, and stopping the mouth of their accusers, and obtaining of peace, joy, and the lively hope of the everlasting crowne: yet many a gracious soul professes their unacquaintednesse with the solide and thriving way of usemaking of Christ for *growth in grace and true Sanctification*. Therefore some discovery of the truth here cannot but be usefull, seasonable, yes and acceptable unto them. If He who is the *Truth*, would give grace to understand, and to unfold this so necessary and alwayes advantageous a *Truth*; and would help to write of and expaine this *Truth*, by faith in him, who is here said to be the *Truth*; then should we have cause to blesse and magnifie his name: but if he, because of sin, shall hide himself, and not let our shoud beames of light, whereby we might discover light, we shall but *darken counsell with words without knowledge*, and leave the matter as unclear, as ever. Therefore is it necessarie, there be both in him that writeth, and in such as read a single dependence on him, who is given for a *leader*. *Isa. 40:3.* and hath promised to *bring the blind by a way, which they knew not; and to lead them in paths that they had not known, and to make darkness*

nesse light before them, and crooked things straight. *Esa. 42: 16.* that thus by acting such on him, we may finde, in so far, the truth of this verified, viz. *That he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*

Now for clearing up of this matter, we would know, That our Lord Iesus, from the beginning of this Chapter is laying downe some grounds of consolation, sufficient to comfort his Disciples, against the sad newes of his departure and death: and to encourage them against the feares they had of much evill to befall them, when their Lord & Master should be taken from them: Which is a sufficient proof of the tender heart of Iesus, who alloweth all his followers strong consolation, against all feares, hazards, troubles, and perplexities, which they can meet with in their way. He will not leave them comfortlesse; and therefore he layeth downe strong grounds of consolation, to support their drooping and fainting hearts; as loving to see his followers rejoycing alwayes in the Lord, and Singing in the wayes of Zion; that the world may see, and be convinced of a reality in Christianity, and of the preferableesse of that life, notwithstanding of all the troubles that attend it, unto any other, how sweet and delectable so ever it may appear to flesh and blood.

In prosecution of which designe, he told them *vers. 4.* that they knew whither He went, and the way also, which he was to take, and by which he was to bring them to the Father, to the mansions spoken of; and so to live eternall. But Thomas rashly and incredulously (as too usually he did *Chap. 11: 16.* and *20: 25*) venteth himself,

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and little lesse then contradicteeth his Master, saying
*vers. 5. We know not whither thou goest, and
 how can we know the way?* wherein we have an
 emblem of many a beleever, who may have more
 grace and knowledge of God and of Christ, than
 they will be able to see, or acknowledge that they
 have, what through temptations; inward dis-
 tempers; sense of their many defects and great
 ignorance; strong desires of high measures; clear-
 er discoveries of the vastnesse of the object; mi-
 stakes about the true nature of grace; despising
 the day of small things; and indistinctnesse as to
 the actings of grace, or want of understanding and
 right uptaking of grace, in its various out goings,
 and actings under various notions, and the like.

Whereupon Christ, after his usuall manner, se-
 kech occasion to clear up that ground of consolati-
 on further unto them; and to let them see the true
 way of coming to the Father, that thereby they
 might be helped to see, that they were not such
 strangers unto the way, as they supposed; and with-
 all he amplifieth; and layeth out the properties and
 excellencies of *this way*, as being *the true and li-
 ving way*, and the *only true and living way*; and
 that in such a manner, as they might both see the
 way to be perfect, full, saife, saving and satis-
 fying; and also learne their duty; of improving
 this way alwayes, and in all things, untill they
 came home at length to the Father: saying *I am the
 Way, the Truth and the Life: no man cometh to
 the Father but by me.*

Christ then, saying, that He not only is *the Way*
 to the Father, even the *true way*; but that he is

to the true way, as that he is also *Truth* it self, in the abstract, and so the *Living way*, that he is *Life* it self, in the abstract, giveth us ground to consider, after what manner it is, that He is the *Truth*, and the *Life*, as well as the *Way*; and that for the clearing up and discovering of His being an absolutely perfect, transcendently excellent, incomparably preferable, and fully satisfying way, usefull to beleivers in all cases, all exigents, all distresses, all difficulties, all tryals, all temptations, all doubts, all perplexities; & in all causes or occasions of distempers, feares, faintings, discouragements &c, which they may meet with in their way to heaven. And this will lead us to cleare up the duty of beleivers, on the other hand, and to shew how they should, in all their various cases and difficulties, make use of Christ, as the only sufficient *Way to the Father*, and as *Truth* and *Life* in the way, and so we will be led to speak of Christs being to his people all that is requisite for them here in the way, whether for justification or sanctification, and how people are to make use of him, as being all, or as being made of God to us *Wisdom, Righteousnesse, Sanctification and Redemption*. 1. Cor. 1:30.

Ere we come to the words in particular, we would look upon them, as having relation to *Thomas* his words, in the preceeding verse. wherein he did little lesse, then contradict what Christ had said in the 4 vers. and learne severall very comfortable points of doctrine, as,

First.

That Iesus Christ is very tender of his followers, and will not cast them off, nor upbraid them for every escape, whereby they may provock him to anger and grieve his Spirit; but gently passeth by many of their failings, when he findeth they are not obstinate in their mistake, nor perverse in their way: for how gently and meekly doth He here passe over Thomas his unhandsome expression, findeing that Thomas spoke here, not out of obstinacy and pertinaciousnesse, but out of ignorance and a mistake. And the reason is because 1 Christ knoweth our infirmitie and weaknesse, and is of a tender heart, and therefore *Will not break the bruised reed.* Esa. 42. Well knoweth He, that rough and untender handling would crush us, and break us all in pieces. And 2 He is full of bowells of mercy, and can have compassion on them that are out of the way and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Heb. 4: 13. & 5: 2.

Which truth, as, upon the one hand, it should encourage all to choose him for their leader & give up themselves to Him, who is so tender of his followers; so, upon the other hand, it should rebuke such as are ready to intertaine evill and hard thoughts of Him, as if he were an hard Master, and ill to be followed; and put all from interteaining the least thought of his untendernesse, and want of compassion. But moreover,

Some generalls

Secondly.

WE see, That weaknesse and corruptions breaking out in beleivers, when they are honestly and ingenuously laid open before the Lord, will not scarre Him away: But rather engadge Him the more to helpe and succour. Much of Thomas his weaknesse and corruption appeared in what he said: yet the same being honestly and ingenuously laid open to Christ, not out of a spirit of contradiction, but out of a desire to learne, Christ is so far from thrusting him away, that He rather condescendeth the more, out of love and tendernesse, to instruct him better, and to cleare the way more fully. And that because 1. He knoweth our mould and fashion, how feeble and frail we are, and that if he should deal with us according to our folly, we should quickly be destroyed. 2. He is not as Man, hasty, rash, Proud; but gentle, loving, tender and full of compassion. 3. It is his office and proper work to be an instructor to the ignorant, and a helper of our infirmities and weaknesse, a phisitian to binde up and cure our sores & wounds.

Who would not then willingly give up themselves to such a teacher, that will not thrust them to the door, nor give them up to themselves, alwayes when their corruptions would provoke Him th. unto? And what a madnesse is this in many, to stand aback from Christ, because of their infirmities; and to scarre at Him, because of their weaknesse, when the more corruption we finde the more should

Proposed.

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should we run to him? and it is soon enough to depart from Christ, when he thrusts us away; & sayeth, he will have no more to doe with us: yea he will allow us to stay, after we are, as it were, thrice thrust away: only let us take heed, that we approve not ourselves in our evils, that we hide them not, as unwilling to part with them, that we obstinately maintaine them not, nor ourselves in them: but that we lie open before him, and deal with him, with honesty, ingenuity and plainnesse.

Thirdly.

WE see further, *That ignorance ingenuously acknowledged and laid open before Christ puts the soul in a faire way to get more instruction.* Thomas having candidely, according as he thought, in the simplicity of his heart, professed his ignorance, is in a faire way now to get instruction: for this is Christs work to instruct the ignorant, to open the eyes of the blinde.

Why then are we so foolish, as to conceale our ignorance from him, and to hide our case and condition from him: and why doth not this commend Christ's School to us so much the more? why do we not carry as ingenuous schollars, really desirous to learne? But.

Fourthly.

WE may learne. *That our ill condition, and distempers put into Christs hand will have remarkable ou'gates, and an advantagious issue;*

seeing Christ taketh occasion here from *Thomas* his laying open his condition, not without some mixture of corruption, to cleare up the truth, more fully and plainly, than it was before: for hereby 1. Christ giveth an open declaration of the glory of his power, mercy, goodnesse, wisdom &c. 2. He hath occasion to give a proof of his divine art, and glorious skill of healing diseased souls, and of making brocken bones stronger than ever they were 3. Thus he effectually accomplisheth his noble designes, and perfecteth his work, in a way tending to abase Man, by discovering his infirmities, and failings; and to glorifie Himself in his goodnesse and love. 4. Thus he triumpheth more over Satan, and in a more remarkable and glorious manner destroyeth his works. 5. Thus he declar-eth how wonderfully he can make all things work together for good to his chosen ones, that love him, and follow him. 6. Yea thus he engageth souls to wonder more at his divine wisdom and power; to despaire lesse in time coming, when cases would seem hard; to acknowledge his great and wonderfull grace, and his infinite power and wisdom, that can bring death out of life; and also to be more sensible of the mercy, and thankful for it.

O beleever; what matter of joy is here? how happy art thou, that hath given up thy self to him. Thy worst condition can turne to thy advantage. He can make thy ignorance, vented with a mixture of corruption, turne to the increase of thy knowledge. Blesse him for this; and with joy and satisfaction, abide thou under his tutory &c.

at his school. And withall be not discouraged; be thy ease of ignorance and corruption what it will, lay it out before him with sincerity and singlenesse of heart, and then *thou mayest glory in thine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on thee* 2 Cor. 12: 9. for thou shalt see, in due time, what advantage infinite love and wisdom can bring to thy soul thereby.

May not this be a strong motive to induce strangers to give up themselves to him, who will sweetly take occasion at their failings, and short comings, to helpe them forward in the way? and what excuse can they have, who sit the call of the gospel, and say in effect they will not goe to Christ because their case is not good. And oh that believers were not sometimes led away with this error of searving at Christ, because of infirmities seen and discovered!

Firstly.

IT is remarkeable, that, as the disciples did sometimes vent much of their carnall conceptions of the kingdome of Christ, as apprehending it to be some carnall, outward, pompous, stately, and, upon that account, desirable condition; so there might be much of this carnall apprehension, lurking under this acknowledgment and question of Thomas: And the Lord, who knew their thoughts, doth here wisely draw them off those notions, and set them about another study: To tell us, *That it is best and most usefull and profitable for us, to be much taken up in the study or search of necessary*

and fundamentall truths and particularly, of the way to the father, for 1. Here is the substantiall food of the soul: other notions are but vaine, and oftentimes they make the case of the Soul worse, but the study of this is alwayes edifying. 2 The right understanding of this, & other fundamentall truths, will not puff up, but keep the soul humble, and will make the soul active and diligent in duty. 3 The fruite of this study is profitable, and lasting. 4 And the right uptaking of these truths will discover the vanity of other sciences, falsely so called, and the folly of spending our time about other things. 5 The right understanding of this fundamentall; will helpe us to understand other truths the better. 6 A mistake in this and such like fundamentals, or the ignorance of them, is more dangerous, then the ignorance of or a mistake in other things.

Oh if this were teaching us all, in humility, to be much in the study of such fundamentall necessary truths, as this is: and to guard against a piece of vanity in affecting knowledge, the effect of which, is nothing but a puffing of us up with pride & conceite.

Sixtly.

WE may here take notice of what may serve to discover Thomas his mistake, and what is the ground of Christ's assertion *vers. 4.* which Thomas doth little lesse than contradict *vers. 3.* viz. That such as had any acquaintapce with Christ, did, according to the measure of their knowledge of him, both

both know heaven, and the way to it, whence we see those truths.

1. Persons may have some real acquaintance with Christ, and yet be, for a time, very indistinct in their notions about him, and apprehensions of him: They may know Christ, in some measure; and yet look upon themselves as great strangers to the knowledge of heaven, and be oft complaining of their ignorance of the right way to heaven.

2. Where there is the least measure of true acquaintance with Christ, with love to him, and a desire to know more of him, Christ will take notice thereof, though it be covered over with a heap of mistakes, and accompanied with much ignorance, weakness, and indistinctness. He seeth not as man seeth: which is good news to some, that are weak in knowledge, and unable to give any good account of any knowledge they have, yet one thing they can say, *That he who knoweth all things, knoweth that they love him.*

3. Various are the dispensations of Gods grace unto his owne: to some he giveth a greater, to others a lesser measure of knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; And to one & the same person, more at one time than at another. Various are his manifestations and outlettings of grace and love. Small beginnings may come to much at length. Thomas, and the rest of the disciples, had but little cleare and distinct apprehensions of the way of Salvation through Iesus Christ, and yet ere all was done, they attained to such a measure of understanding in the mysteries of God, as that we are said to be built upon the foundation

of the Apostles; Christ Iesus being the chief corner stone Ephes. 2: 20. This should teach the best much sobriety, and not to judge of all by themselves; or to think, that Gods way with them must be a standart or a rule, whereby to judge of all the rest; as if his way of dealing were one and the same with all.

4 The knowledge of Christ is all, know him and we know heaven, and the way to it: for upon this ground doth Christ make good, what he had said, touching their knowing whither he went, & the way: and answereth the objection that Thomas did propose, viz, Because he was the way &c and they being acquaint with him (which here is presupposed) were not ignorant of the place, whither he was going; nor of the way leading thither. The knowledge then of Iesus Christ is a true and full compend of all saving knowledge. Hence It is life eternall to know him Ioh. 17: 3. They that know him, know the Father Ioh. 14: 9. & 8: 19. They that see him, see the Father also Iohn. 14: 9. He is in the Father, and the Father in him, Iohn. 14: 10, 11. & 10: 38, & 17. 21. And so knowing him, they know heaven: for what is heaven else but the presence, and glorious manifestations of the Father: for when Christ speaks of his going to heaven, he sayeth, he was going to the Father. So knowing him, they knew the way, both how Christ was to goe to heaven, as our Cautiomer, Head & Atturney; and how we must follow.

Let then a Man have never so much knowledge, & be acquainted with the mysteries of all artes & sciences: & with the depths of nature, and in-
trigues

trigues of States, and all the theorie of Religion; if he be unacquainted with Iesus Christ, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know.

And upon the other hand, let a poor soule, that is honest, and hath some knowledge of and acquaintance with him, be satisfied, though it cannot discourse, nor dispute, nor speak to cases of consciences, as some others. If we know him, it matters not, though we be ignorant of many things, and thereby become lesse esteemed of by others. Here is the true teste, by which we may take a right estimate of our owne or of others knowledge: The true rule to try knowledge by, is not fine notions, clear and distinct expressions: but heart acquaintance with him, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge Col. 2: 3.*

O sad! that we are not more taken up in this study, which would be a compendious way for us to know all? *Why spend we our money for that which is not bread, and our labour for that which will not profite us? Why waste we our time and spirits, in learning this science, and that art, when alas, after we, with much labour and toyl, have attained to the yondmost pitch there, we are never one whit the nearer heaven and happinesse? yea it were well, if we were not further off? Oh! if we were wise at length, and could think more on this one thing necessary; and could be stirred up to learn more of him, and to make this the subject of all our study, and labour!*

C H A P. I I

Of the words themselves in generall.

WE come now to the words themselves; wherein Christ asserts that, He is (1) *the Way* (2) *the Truth*, (3) *the Life*. & (4) *That no man cometh to the Father but by him*.

In them we learne those two things, in generall. *First* The miserie of wretched man by nature: This cannot be in a few words expressed. These words will point out those particulars thereof, which we will but mention.

1. That he is borne an enemy to, and living at a distance from God, by vertue of the curse of the brocken covenant of life, made with Adam.

2. That he neither can, nor will returne to God, of himself. His way is not in himself; He hath need of another to be his way.

3. That he is a blinde wandering creature, ready to take by wayes and to wander; yea he loveth to wander: He goeth astray as soon as he is borne, speaking lyes.

4. He cannot discern the true way; but is blinded with prejudice thereat, and full of mistakes, he is nothing but a lump of error:

5. He is dead legally, and really; how can he then come home? How can he walk in the way, though it were pointed out to him?

6. He, even when entred into the way, is subject to so many faintings, swoonings, upstartings, &c. that

that except he get new quickening, he must lye be the way, and perish.

In a word; his miserie is such as cannot be expressed; for as little as it is beleev'd, and laid to heart; or seen and mourned for, and lamented.

Now for a ground to our following discourse, I would presse the solide, through, and sensible apprehension of this, without which there will be no usemaking or application of Christ: *for the whole need not the physician, but the sick; and Christ is not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Mat. 9: 13. Marc. 2: 17. Yea, beleev'ers themselves would live within the sight of this, and not forget their frailty: for though there be a change wrought in them, yet they are not perfect, but will have need of Christ as *the Way, the Truth and the Life*, till he bring them in, and set them down upon the throne, and crowne them with the crowne of life. And O happy they, who must not walk one foot without this guide, leading them by the hand, or rather carying them in his armes. Let all then, who would make use of Christ, remember what they were, and what they are, and keep the sense of their frailty and miserie fresh; that seeing their need of him, they may be in better case to look out to him for help and supply, and be more distinct in their application of him.

The Second generall is, That Christ is a compleat Mediator, thoroughly furnished for all our necessities. Are we at a distance from the Father: He is a *Way* to bring us together. Are we wandered out of the way: He is *the Way* to us. Are we blinde and ignorant: He is *the Truth*. Are we dead: He is *the Life*.

Life: Concerning this fulnesse & compleatnesse of his, we would marke those things.

1. That he is thoroughly furnished with all things we stand in need of: *the Way, the Truth and the Life*. He hath eye salve, cloathing, gold tryed in the fire, &c. For the Spirit of the Lord is upon him, and hath anoynted him. *Esa. 61: 1.*

2. He is suitably qualified, not only having a fulnesse, and an all fulnesse; so that whatever we need, is to be had in him; but also a suitable fulnesse answering our case to the life; are we out of the way. He is *the Way*, are we dead, he is *Life* &c.

3. He is richly qualified with this suitable good. He hath not only wisdom and knowledge, but treasures of it, yea all the treasures thereof *Col. 2: 3.* There is fulnesse in him, yea it hath pleased the father that in him should all fulnesse dwell. *Col. 1: 19.* Yea the fulnesse of the godhead dwelleth in him bodily. *Col. 2: 9.*

4. Hence this is an upmaking compleatnesse & fulnesse: for we are said to be Compleat in him *Col. 2: 10.* And he is said to be all and in all *Col. 4: 11.* He filleth all in all. *Ephes. 1. 23.*

5. It is also a satisfying compleatnesse. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the eare with hearing, the avaricious man is not satisfied with gold, nor the ambitious man with honour: but still they are crying with the loach-leech give, give. But the man who getteth Christ is full; he sitteth downe and cryeth, enough, enough, and no wonder, for he hath all. He can desire no more, he can seek no more, for what can the man want, that is compleat in him?

6 There is here that, which will answer all the objections of a soul, and these sometimes are not few. If they say, they cannot know the way to the Father; then he is *Truth*, to instruct and teach them that, and so to enter them into it: and if they say, they cannot walk in that way, nor advance in it one step, but will faint and sit up, succumb and fall by, he answereth that. He is the *Life*, to put life, and keep life in them, and to cause them to walk, by putting a new principle of life in them, and breathing of new on that Principle.

O thrice happy they who have fled to him for refuge! It is easie for them, to answer all objections, and cavils of Satan, and of a false heart; It is easie for them, to put Christ to answer all. And on the other hand, who can tell the misery of such, as are strangers to Iesus? How shall their wants be made up? how shall they answer challenges, accusations, temptations, doubts, feares, objections, and discouragements *U*st up in their way?

O! should not this indeare the way of the gospel to us, & make Christ precious unto us? Is it not a wonder that such an allsufficient Mediator, who is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God through him, should be so little regarded and sought unto, and that there should be so few, that imbrace him, and take him, as he is offered in the gospel?

How can this be answered, in the day of accounts? what excuse can unbelievers now have? Is not all to be found in Christ that their case calleth for? Is he not a compleat mediator, thorow-

ly furnished with all necessities? Is not the riches of his fulnesse written on all his dispensations? The mouths then of unbelievers must be for ever stopped.

C H A P. III.

How Christ is the way, in General.

I am the way.

WE come now to speak more particularly to the words; and first of his being a *Way*. Our designe being to point at the way of usemaking of Christ, in all our necessities, straites and difficultyes, which are in our way to heaven: and particularly to point out the way, how beleevers should make use of Christ, in all their particular exigences, and to live by faith in him, walk in him, grow up in him, advance & march forward toward glory in him. It will not be amisse to speak of this fulnesse of Christ in reference to unbelievers, as occasion offereth, because this will help to cleare the other.

Before we can cleare up, how any can make use of Christ, we must speak something of their necessity of him, and of his being furnished fitly, fully, richly & satisfyingly for their case; and this will make the way of usemaking of Christ more plaine.

While Christ then sayes *I am the Way*, he points out those things to us.

first. That man is now estranged from the Lord, and in a wandering condition: He hath departed, from

from God; he is revolted and gone. *They are all gone out of the way.* Rom. 3: 12. *They goe astray, as soon as they are borne, speaking lies.* Psal. 58: 3. Nay not only so, but we love naturally to wander, and to run away from God; as Ieremias compleaneth of that wicked people Ier. 14: 10. Naturally, with the dromedary, we traverse our wayes. Ier. 2. 23. and run hither and thither, but never looke towards him. Nay we are like thole spoken of Iob. 21: 14. *We desire not the knowledge of his wayes, we will have none of him.* Psal. 81: 11. *Not of his reproof.* Prov. 1: 30.

Oh how sad is this? And yet how is it more sad, that this is not beleaved, nor once considered. And that it is not beleaved, is manifest, for,

1. How rare is it to meet with persons, that are not very well pleased and satisfied with themselves and their condition? They thank the Lord, it was ay well with them. They have no complaints. They see no wants, nor necessities. They wonder what makes folk complaine of their condition, of their evill heart, or of their hazard and danger. They understand not these matters.

2. Dowe not finde people very quiet and at rest, though they remaine in the congregation of the dead Prov. 21: 16. They sleep in a sound skinne, because they see no hazard. The thoughts of their condition never bereave them of one nights rest: no challenges have they; all is at peace with them, for the strong man keeps the house.

3. How rare is it, to finde people exercised about this matter, and busied with it in their thoughts, either while alone, or while in company with

with others; or once seriously thinking and considering of it, yea or so much as suspecting the matter?

4 How rare is it to see any soul brocken in heart, and humbled because of this? who is walking under this as under a load? whose soul is bleeding upon the consideration of this? Is there any mourning for this?

5 Where is that to be heard, *Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?* How shall we enter into the right way? where is that good old way, that we may walk in it? Few such questions and cases troubling consciences: and no wonder; for a deep sleep is upon them.

6. How cometh it then, that the pointing forth of the way is so little hearkened unto; Sure, were this naturall condition perceived, a report of the sure and false way, would be much more welcome, then it is. Christ by his Messengers would not be put to cry so often in vaine. *This is the way, turne in hither.*

Here is enough to convince of this ignorance, and insensiblenesse: but it is his Spirit, which convinceth the world of sin, Iohn. 16. that must beare home this conviction,

Secondly. It pointeth out to us this, That the way of man is not in himself Ier. 10: 13. That is, That nothing he can do, can or will prove a way to him to the Father: for Christ is the Way, as excluding all other meanes and wayes. And that man can do nothing to help himself into the way is cleare, for

1. His way is, *is as darknesse* Prov. 4: 14. He knoweth

knoweth no better, he is satisfied therewith, there he sleepeth and resteth.

2. He cannot, nor doth not desire to returne. *He hateth to be reformed.*

3. Yea, he thinketh himself saile; no man can convince him of the contrary; The way he is in seemeth right to him, though the end thereof be death, Prov. 14: 12 & 16; 25.

4. Every man hath his owne particular way, to which he turneth Isa. 53: 6. some one thing or other, that he is pleased with, and that he thinks will abundantly carry him through, and there resteth he: and what these ordinarily are, we shall hear presently.

5. In this *his way*, which yet is a false way, he trusteth Hos. 10: 13. he leaneth upon it, little knowing that it will faill him at length, and that he and his hope and confidence shall perish.

Is it not strange then to see men and women *gawding about to seek their way*, as it is said, Jer. 2: 36. as if they could finde it out, or as if they could of themselves fall upon the way. What a lamentable sight is it, to see people, *wearying themselves with very lies*, Ezech. 24: 12. and *wearied in the multitude of their owne counsells*, Esa. 47: 15.

But what are those false and lying wayes, which men weary themselves in, and all in vaine, & which they choose & trust into, and yet are not the way, which will prove saile and sure?

Answer. It will not be easie to reckon them all up, we shall name some, that are principall, and most ordinary, such as,

1. Good purposes and resolutions, with which many

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many deceive themselves, supposing that to be all which is required: and alas all their purposes are like to Ephraims goodnesse, like the early cloud and morning dew, that soon evanisheth: *their purposes are soon broken off*, and soon disappointed, because made without counsell; Prov. 15: 22. Many foolishly rest here, that they have a good minde to do better, and to amend their wayes, and they purpose after such a time or such a time, they shall beginne a new manner of life; but their purposes never come to any effect, and so at length they and their purposes both perish.

2. *Some convictions and inward challenges.* The word now and then pierceth them so far, and sore and sharpe dispensations from the Lord so far affecte their heart, that they see it is not well with them, and they are made with Saul to cry out, *I have sinned* 1 Sam. 15: 24. and they advance no further, those convictions either die out againe, or work no further change: And poor souls they think because at such a sermon or such a Communion, they had some such convictions and sharpe challenges, therefore they imagine all is well with them, when a Judas may have convictions, sharper than ever they had. & a Felix Act. 24: 25.

3. *Convictions followed with some sort of amendment.* Some may dreadfully deceive themselves with this, and conclude that all is right with them, and that the way they are in is saife & sure: because they have had convictions, which have been so effectually, as to cause them amend many things, and become, as to many things, changed men & women, when alas their way is but a way of dark-
nesse.

nesse still; it is not Christ, they have never come to him. Herod hearing John Baptist had his owne convictions and amendements: for he did many things, Mark. 6: 30.

4. Many rest upon their outward civility & morality, or negative holinesse. They cannot be challenged for grosse faults, and that is all the way they have to rest in; alas, could not a wicked Pharisee say, as much as they, viz That he was no extortioner, unjust person, nor an adulterer, nor such as the publicane was, Luk. 18: 11? How many heathens, as to this, shall outstripe such as professe themselves Christians? and yet they lived and dyed strangers to the right way to happinesse. See what that poor young man said Luk. 18: 21.

5. Some may win to more then civility, and attaine unto a kinde of outward holinesse, and outward performance of the duties of religion, such as hearing, reading, prayer, communicating; and rest there, and yet perish: for that is but *their owne way*; it is not *the right way*. Had not the foolish virgins lamps? and did they not waite with the rest Matt. 25? and will not many say in that day, we have eaten and drunken in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets, to whom Christ shall answer, I know not whence you are, depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, Luk. 13: 26, 27? were not the jewes much in duties & outward ordinances? and yet see how the Lord rejecteth them all, Esa. 1: 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, & 66: 3.

6. Much knowledge doth deceive many. They think because they can talk of religion, speak to cases of consciences, handle places of scripture, and

the like, that therefore all is right with them: when alas that is but a slippery ground to stand upon. The Pharisees sat in Moses seat, & taught sometimes sound doctrine: and yet were heart enemies to Jesus. Mat. 23. And will not many, think to plead themselves in to heaven. By saying, that they have *Prophecyed in his name*, Mat. 23: 34. There is a knowledge that puffeth up 1 Cor. 13: 2. Some there are, whose knowledge seemeth to be operative and practicall, and not merely speculative. Some may escape the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ, and yet againe become entangled therein & overcome, so that *their latter end is worse than the beginning*. See 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. 22. knowledge, I grant, is good, but it is not Christ; and so it is not *the way to the Father*: and many, alas! lean to it, & are deceived, at last.

7. A kinde of seeming seriousnessse in the performance of duties, and in seeking of God, deceiveth many. They think because they are not conscious to their owne dissembling, but they look upon themselves as earnest in what they do, that therefore all is well. Sayeth not Christ, that not every one that sayeth Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God, Mat. 7: 21. that is, not every one that reneweth their lutes, & ingeminateth their desires, cry and cry over againe, and as it were, will not give it over. And yet they come short of their expectation: did not the foolish virgins seem earnest and serious, when they continued waiting with the rest, and at length, cryed Lord, Lord open unto us; and yet they were kept at the doore.

Many

Many consider not that there is a secret and close hypocrisie, that some may be under and not know it, as well as a grosse hypocrisie, and dissimulation, which may be easily observed: *Will not many seek to enter in, that shall not be able?* Mat. 7: 13. Luk. 13. 24.

8. Many may deceive themselves with this, that they are looked on by others godly discerning persons & ministers, as good serious Christians, and that they carry so handsomely and faire, that no man can judge otherwayes of them, than that they are good serious seekers of God. But alas the day is coming, which will discover many things: and many one will be deceived both of themselves & of others. *Not he who commendeth himself is approved, but whom God approveth.* 2 Cor. 10: 18. Therefore Paul exhorts *Timothie to study to show himself approved unto God,* 2 Tim. 2: 15. Men look only on the outside, and cannot see in to the heart, but God searcheth the heart: and it is an easie matter to deceive Men: But God will not be deceived.

9. Some may suppose themselves in a saile and sure way, if they out stripe others in religious duties, and be much in extraordinary duties, when alas, for all that, the heart may be rotten. The Pharisee fasted twice a week. Luk. 18: 12. and yet was but an enemy to Christ. O how deceitfull is the heart of Man!

10. Inward peace and quietnesse of conscience, may deceive some: and they may suppose that all is right with them, because they do nothing over the belly of their conscience. Their heart doth not

accuse them of falshood and dissimulation in their way with God or Man ; but they do all things according to their light. No doubt that young Man, Luk. 18: 21. spoke according to his judgment, and light, when he said, *all these things have I observed from my youth.* And Paul sayeth of himself. Act. 23: 1. *that he had lived in all good conscience before God till that very day.* Meaning, that even while he was a Pharisee unconverted, he had not thortured his conscience, nor done any thing directly against it, but had alwayes walked according to his light. See Act. 26: 9.

11. A way of Zeal may deceive many ; who may think their case unquestionable, because they are Zealous for their way : and as they think their Zeal is pure zeal for God : was not Paul, while a Pharisee, very Zealous, when out of zeal to his way he persecuted the Church? Phil. 3: 6. See my zeal for the Lord, could a Iehu. say, 2. King. 10: 16. and the jewes had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, Rom. 10: 2. and Christ tells us, that such as should persecute the Apostles unto death, would think they did God good service Iohn. 16: 2.

12. Some also may put it beyond question, that they are in the right way, because, they are more strick in all their wayes, than others, and will not so much as keep fellowship or company with them, saying, with those Esa. 65: 5. *Stand by, I am holier than thou, come not neare to me, who yet are but a smoak in Gods nose, & a fire that burneth all the day.*

13. Some may rest on, and deceive themselves with

with their great attainments, and more then ordinary experiences. When alas! we see to what a hieght some may come, and yet prove nothing. Let such souls read with trembling that word of *Paul* Heb. 6: 4. 5. where we see some may come to be enlightened, to taste of the heavenly gift, to be made partakers of the holy ghost, to taste the good word of God, & the powers of the world to come, and yet prove castawayes: taking these expressions as pointing forth some thing distinct from reall grace.

Many such false wayes, wherein Men please themselves, might be mentioned: By these every one may see cause of Searching & trying, over & over againe. It is a dreadfull thing to be deceived here; and it is best to put it to a tryall, when there is a possibility of getting the matter helped: and many may feare and tremble, when they see, they are not yet come the length of many such, as sit downe without Christ, and lose all their labour. O! if this could put people to a serious examination & tryall of themselves, and of the nature of that way, wherein they are & rest at present!

Thirdly We might here observe. *That this true & living way is but one for all.* There is but one Mediator betwixt God & Man, 1 Tim. 2: 5. One Mediator for both old & new Testament: the Seed of the woman: Howbeit the Lords dispensations with his people, in that one way, may be various; as his way with his people under the Law is different from his way with his people under the gospell; and his dispensations with individual beleeyers, whether under the law, or under the

gospel, is not the same in all things.

And this should reach us to relinquish our own wayes, and to enter into this one only way: and it should move such as are in this way, to study unity and agreement among themselves, and yet not to inferre or suppose that Gods way with them must be in all things alike. Yea, though the Lords way with them be different from his way with others, & more dark, disconsolate, and bitter; yet let them be quiet and silent before the Lord, and acknowledge his goodnesse, that hath brought them into the one only way, Iesus Christ, and keepeth them there.

But fourthly, the maine thing here, and which is obvious, is this, *That Iesus Christ is the Way to the Father.* the one and only way, the sovereign and excellent way: and he alone is this way. There is not another. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, *Act. 4: 12.*

For clearing of this, we shall speak a little to those foure things, and show

1. *What is our case, and what need we have of a way.*
2. *How Christ answereth this our case & need, and is a fit way for us.*
3. *How he alone is this way, and answereth this our case.*
4. *What are the rare advantages & specialities of this way.*

And this will make way for our clearing up; how Christ is made use of as a way by poor sinners.

For the first of these, our present case & necessity

in generall.

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ie, something was spoken to it before: we shall reduce all to those two heads. The first is our state of guilt, and separation from God because of sin & guile. The next is our state of wickedness and enmity against God.

As to the first, we may take notice of those things.

1. That sin originall and actuall hath separated us from God, and cast us out of his favour, and out of that station of favour & friendship, which once we were advanced to, in Adam.

2. That we are under Gods curse & wrath, and excommunicated from the presence of the Lord, by a sad, yet just, sentence, according to law, and so are under death.

As to the next thing, we may take notice of those particulars

1. That we are impure and polluted with sin, and dayly iniquity.

2. That we are ignorant of the right way of returning into favour with God, seeking out to ourselves many inventions.

3. That we are impotent for any good work, or commanded duty.

4. That not only so, but we are unwilling to do any thing that is good, or to enter into the way, when pointed out unto us; yea we are enemies to God by wicked works, & have an innate hatred to all his wayes.

5. We desire not to be out of the condition where into we are: there we love to lie and sleep, and desire not to be roused up or awakened.

6. *We are under the power & command of Satan, who leadeth us out of the way, yea & driveth us forward in the wrong way to our perdition.*

These things are plaine & undeniable, and need no further confirmation, though alas! it is little beleev'd & laid to heart by many.

For the second, *How Christ answereth this our case and necessitie.* He is a way to us, to helpe us out of both these, both out of our state of guilt, and separation; and out of our state of wickednesse, & enmity.

And first he helpeth us out of our state of guilt & separation.

1. *By Taking away our guilt & sin, being made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him* 2 Cor. 5: 21. He hath filled up the great gap, betwixt God & us, with his body, and hath made of it, as it were, a bridge, by which we may goe over unto the Father: *we enter now into the holiest by the blood of Iesus, by a new & living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh,* Heb. 10: 19, 20. *we are now brought neer by his blood,* Ephes. 2: 13. So that through him we are restored againe to friendship with God, & made one with him: for Christ the Mediator hath made both one, reconciling jewes & Gentils both unto God, in one body, by the crosse, having slain the enmity, Ephes. 2: 16.

2. *By taking away the curse & wrath, that was due to us, being made a curse for us,* Gal. 3: 13.

So that he is become our peace, and through him, we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father, and are no more strangers & forreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, Ephes. 2: 14, 18, 19. He is set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, Rom. 3: 25, 1 John. 2: 2. & 4: 10. by him have we now received atonement Rom. 5: 11.

Next, He helpeth us out of our state of wickednesse & enmity.

1. By taking away our impurity and uncleannesse, by washing us & cleansing us in his blood Ephes. 5: 26. 27. Col. 1: 12. having purchased grace for us Ephes. 1: 3. we are blessed with all spirituall blessings in Him: He applyeth his merites and layeth the foundation of grace & holinesse in the soul, & carryeth on the work of mortification and vivification, and so, killing the old man by his Spirit, both meritoriously & efficiently, he cleanseth and washeth. Hence we are said, to be Baptized with him in his death, and buried with him by baptisme into death, that we should walk in newnesse of life: and so our old Man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin, Rom. 6: 3, 4, 6. And for our dayly infirmities & escapes, whereby we pollute ourselves, his blood is a fountaine opened to the house of David & to the inhabitants of Ierusalem, for sin & uncleannesse Zach. 13: 1. and to this fountaine he bringeth, by the Spirit of repentance, which he, as an exalted prince, bestoweth. Act. 5: 31. & by faith. So 1 Ioh. 2: 1. If any Man sin, we have an advocat with the Father, &c.

2. As for our ignorance & blindnesse, he taketh that away, being given for a light to the Gentiles. Esai. 42: 6, & 49: 6. Luk. 2. 32. He is sent to open the blinde eyes Esai. 42: 7. to bring out the prisoners from their dark prisons, Esai. 42: 7. & 61: 1. Yea, he is anoynted for this end. So that such as walk in darknesse see a great light, and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light hath shined, Esai. 9: 2. Mat. 4: 13. and he hath eye salve to give Revel 3: 18.

3. He is qualified for taking away our impotency: so that through Him, we can do all things, Phil. 4: 13. When we are weak, we are strong in him, who is our strength, and liveth in us, 2 Cor. 12. 10. Gal. 2: 20. Hence He worketh in us both to will, & to do, of his owne good pleasure, Phil. 2: 13.

4. He also taketh away our naturall averfenesse, unwillingnesse, wickednesse & hatred of his wayes, making his people *willing, in the day of his power.* Psal. 110. So he taketh away the enmitie that is in us Col. 2: 20, 21. and reconcilerh us to God, and to His wayes, that our hearts do sweetly comply with them, and we become most willing and glade to walk in them; yea & to run the way of his commandments through his enlarging of our hearts, Psal. 119: 32.

5. He likewise taketh away that desire and willingnesse which we have to lie still in our naturall condition; by convincing us of the dreadfull hazard thereof, through the Spirit of conviction, whereby he convinceth the world of in. Iohn. 16: 8. and circumciserh their eares to hear, & maketh them willing

willing to hearken to the counsel of God.

6. As for the power & Dominion of Satan, he breaketh that, by *leading captivity captive*. Ephes. 4: 2. Psal. 68: 18. and *spoiling the strong Man's house*; for he is come to destroy the works of the devil, 1 Iohn. 3: 8. and *He spoileth principalities & powers*, Col. 2: 15. Thus, as captaine of salvation, he leadeth them out as a conquerour; having payed the price, he delivereth also by power and authoritie, from the hand of this Jailour.

And thus we see, how he answereth our case and necessitie, and is a fit way for us: and though this be not questioned; yet little is it beleev'd and considered, and lesse put in practise.

-And as for the *Third particular*. That *He alone is this way*, and answereth our case herein, it needeth not be much spoken to, since it is clear and manifest, confirmed by the experience of all generations, and the disappointments of fools, who have been seeking other wayes. Angels in heaven cannot do our businesse. They cannot satisfy justice for us; nor have they any power over our heart to turbe it as they will; nay they are not acquainted with our secret thoughts, that cabinet is kept close from them, and reserved as the peculiar privilege of God alone. The blood of bulls and goats can nor do it; for the Apostle tells us, that it is impossible that that should take away sin, Heb. 10: 4. That blood shed according to the law did cleanse ceremonially; but it is only the blood of Iesus, typified by that, which cleanseth really: so that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Iesus Christ once for all. Heb. 10: 10. No

paines or labour of ours can avail here. The Lord will not be pleased with thousands of rams; or with ten thousands of rivers of oil. He will not take our first borne for our transgression, nor the Son of our body for the sin of our soul, Micah. 6: 7. Ordinances and meanes will not do it, nor any invention of our owne, No man can by any meanes redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of the soul is precious & ceaseth for ever. Psal. 49: 7. 8. He alone hath laid downe the price; all our sufferings, prayers, teares, labours, pennances, and the like, signifie nothing here; they cannot satisfie justice for one sin.

As to the fourth particular, viz the singularity of this way, Those things make it manifest and apparent.


1. This is such a way, as can discover it self, and make it self known unto the erring traveller; Christ Iesus is such a way, as can say to the wandering soul, *This is the way walk in it*, Esa. 30: 25. No way can do this. This is comfortable.

2. This way can not only discover it self to the wandering traveller; but also it can bring folk into it. Christ can bring souls unto himself, when they are running on in their wandering condition, He can move their heart to turne in to the right way, put grace in their soul for this end, beginne resolutions in them, and sow the seed of faith; and so stay their course, which they were violently pursuing, and make them look about and consider what they are doing: as the former was good newes to poor blinde and wretched creature, that were

wandering, and knew not whither they were going; so this is good newes to poor souls, that finde their heart inclining to wander, and loving to goe astray.

3. This way can cause us walk in it, If we be rebellious and obstinate. He can command with authoritie: for he is given for a leader and a commander, Esa. 55: 4. How sweet should this be to the soul, that is weightied with a stubborn, untractable and unperswadable heart, that He, as a King, Governour, & Commander, can with authoritie draw, or drive, and cause us follow and run?

4. This way is Truth, as well as the Way, So that the soul that once entereth in here is saife for ever, no wandering here; The wayfareing men though fooles shall not erre in this way, Esa. 35: 8. He will bring the blinde by a way that they knew not, and lead them in paths that they have not knowne; he will make darknesse light before them, and crooked things straight, those things will he do unto them, and not forsake them, Esa. 42: 16.

5. This way is also life, and so can revive the fainting and weary traveller: He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength: Yea, he renewes their strength, and makes them mount up with wings as eagles, and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, Esa. 40: 29, 31. and so he giveth legs to the traveller: yea he carryeth the lambs in his bosome Esa. 40: 11.  who would not walk in this way? what can discourage the man that walketh here?

what

what can he feare? no way can quicken or refresh the weary man. This way can do it: yea it can quicken one that is as dead, and cause him march on with fresh alacrity and vigour.

6 From all these it followeth, that this way is a most pleasant, hartsome, desireable and comfortable way. The man is saife here, and he may sing in the wayes of the Lord, Psal. 138:5. *for wisdoms wayes are wayes of pleasantnesse, and all her paths are peace* Prov. 3: 17. He is a *Way*, that is Food, Physick, cordials, and all that the poor traveller standeth in need of, till he come home.

From all which, ere we come to particulars, we shall in generall shoudly point out those duties, which natively result thence by way of use.

1. O! what cause is there here for all of us to fall on wondering, both that God should ever have condescended to have appointed a way, how sinners and rebels, that had wickedly departed from him, and deserved to be cast out of his presence and favour for ever, might come back againe, and enjoy happinesse and felicity, in the friendships and favour of that God, that could have gote the glory of his justice in our destruction, and stood in no need of us, or of any thing we could do: as also, that he appointed such a way, That Iesus Christ, his only Son should, to speak so, lie as a bridge between God and sinfull rebels, and as a high-way that they might returne to the great God, upon him: let all the creation of God wonder at this wonderfull condescending love of God, that appointed such a way; and of Christ, that was content so low to low, as to become this way to us, this new and li-

ving way; and that for this end, he should have taken on flesh, and become *Emmanuel*, God with us, and tabernackled with us, that through this vaile of his flesh, he might consecrate a way to us. Let angels wonder at this condescendency.

2. Hence we may see ground of being convinced of those things 1. That naturally we are out of the way to peace and favour with God, and in a way that leadeth to death, and so, that our miserie and wretchednesse, so long as it is, so, cannot be expressed. 2. That we can do nothing for ourselves, let all our wits a work we cannot fall upon a way that will bring us home. 3. That it is madnesse for us to seek out another way, and to vex ourselves in vaine, to run to this and to that meane, or invention of our owne, and be found fools in end. 4. That our madnesse is so much the greater in this, that we will turne to our owne wayes, that will fail us, when there is such a noble and excellent & every way satisfying way prepared to our hand. 5. That our wickednesse is so desperat, that the way, which is pointed out to us, doth not please us, and that we will not enter into it, nor walk in it. 6. That this Way, which is also the Truth and the Life, is only worth the Imbracing, and is only saife and sure: we should be convinced and perswaded of the worth, sufficiency and desirablenesse of this way. Reason with ordinary light from the word may teach these things; But grace can only carry them into the heart, and make them take rooting there.

3. We may read here our obligation unto those particulars. 1. To turne our bak upon all other
false

false and deceitfull wayes, and not rest there. 2. To enter into this way; though *the gate be narrow & strait*, Mat. 7: 13. Luk. 13: 24. yet to *strive to enter in*. 3. To resolve to abide in that way as acquiescing in it, resting satisfied with it, and this is *to be rooted in him*, Col. 2: 7. & *to dwell in him*. 1 Iohn. 3: 24. & *to live in him or through him*! 1. Iohn. 4: 9. 4. To *walk in this way*, Col. 2: 6. that is, to make constant use of him, and to make progresse in the way, in & through him: to goe from strength to strength in him, drawing all our furniture from him, by faith, according to the covenant: And this sayeth, that the soul should guard against, 1. stepping aside out of this good & pleasant way. 2. backslideing. 3. sitting up & fainting by the way.

In a word, This pointeth out our duty, to make use of Christ as our way to the father; and only of Christ: and this leads us to the particulars, we shall speak a little to.

There are two maine things, which stand in our way, and hinder us from approaching to the Father, 1. *Unrighteousnesse* and guilt, whereby we are legally banished because of the broken covenant, and the righteous sentence of God according to that covenant: & 2. *Wickednesse*, impurity & unholinesse, which is, as a physicall bar, lying in our way, because nothing that is uncleane can dwell and abide with him, *who is of purer eyes then he can behold iniquitie*; and *nothing that is uncleane can enter in there, where He is*. So then there must be an usemaking of Christ, as a way, through both these impediments. We need *justification & pardon*

don for the one, and *sanctification* & cleansing for the other. Now Christ being the way to the Father, both as to *justification*, in taking away the enmitie, in changing our state, & removing our unrighteousness, & guilt, whereby we were lying under the sentence of the law, adjudging such sinners, as we are, to hell: and as to *sanctification*, in cleansing us from all our pollutions, renewing our souls, washing away our spots & defilements &c. He must be made use of in reference to both.

In speaking to the first, we shall be the shorter, because, through God's great mercy, the gospel pure way of justification by faith in Christ, is richly and abundantly cleared up by many worthy authors of late, both as concerning the theoreticall, and practicall part.

CHAP. IV.

*How Christ is made use of for justification,
as a Way.*

WHAT Christ hath done to purchase, procure & to bring about our *justification* before God, is mentioned already viz. That He stood in the room of sinners, engaging for them as their cautioner, undertaking, & at length paying down the rancome: becoming sin, or a sacrifice for sin, & a curse for them, and so laying downe his life a rancome to satisfy divine justice: and this he hath made known in the gospel, calling sinners to an accepting of him, as their only Mediator, and to a resting upon him for life & salvation; and with-
all

all working-up such, as belong to the election of grace, to an actuall closeing with him, upon the conditions of the covenant, & to an accepting of him, beleeving in him, & resting upon him, & satisfied with, and acquiesceing in that soveraign way of salvation & justification, through a crucified mediator.

Now, for such as would make use of Christ as the way to the Father in the point of *justification*, those things are requisite; to which we shall only premit this word of caution; That we Judge not the want of these requisites a ground to excuse any, that heareth the gospel, from the obligation to believe & rest upon Christ, as He is offered in the gospel.

First. There must be a *conviction of sin & misery*, a conviction of *originall guilt*, whereby we are banished out of God's presence & favour, & are in a state of enmity & death, are come short of the glory of God. Rom. 3: 23. becoming dead under the sentence of death, through the offence of one, Rom. 5: 15. being made sinners by one Mans disobedience vers. 19. and therefore under the reigning power of death vers. 17. and under that judgement, which came upon all men to condemnation, vers. 18. And of originall innate wickednesse, whereby the heart is filled with enmity against God, and is a hater of Him & of all his wayes; standing in full opposition to him & to his holy lawes; loving to contradict and resist him in all his actiogs; despising and undervalueing all his condescensions of love; obstinately refusing his goodnesse & offers of mercy; & peremptorily

persisting in rebellion & heart opposition; not only not accepting his kindnesse & offers of mercy; but contemning them, trampling them underfoot as imbittered against him. As also there must be a conviction of our *actuall transgressions*, whereby we have corrupted our wayes yet more, run further away from God, brought on more wrath upon our souls, according to that sentence of the law, *curst is every one that abideth not in all that is written in the law to do it.* Deut. 27:26. Gal. 3: 10. What way this conviction is begun & carryed on in the soul, and to what a measure it must come, I cannot now stand to explain: only in short know, That upon whatsoever occasion it be begun, whether by a word carryed home to the heart by the finger of God, or by some sharpe & crossing dispensation, feare of approaching death, some hainous outbreacking, or the like, it is a reall thing, a heart reaching conviction, not generall & notionall, but particular, plaine, and pinching, affecting the heart with fear & terrour, making the soul seriously & really to minde this matter, to be taken up with the thoughts of it, and anxiously & earnestly to cry out, *what shall I do to be saved*, and finally will make the soul willing to hearken & hear what hopes of mercy there is in the gospell, and to imbrace the way of salvation, which is there laid downe: And the reason of this is, because Christ himself tells us, *The whole needeth not the phisician, but the sick*, Mat. 9: 12. He is not come to call the righteous, that is, such as are righteous in their owne eyes, but sinners, that is, such as are no more now whole at the heart, as seeing no evill, no hazard

or danger; but pricked & pierced with the sence of their lost condition, being under the heavy wrath & vengeance of the great God, because of sin; and seeing their owne vilenesse, cursednesse, wickednesse & desperat madnesse. Because naturally we hate God & Christ John. 15: 23, 24, 25. and have a strong naturall antipathy at the way of salvation through Iesus; therefore, nothing but strong & inevitable necessity will drive us to a compliance with this gospel device of love.

2. There must be *some measure of humiliation*: under this conviction the man is bowed down, and made mute before God; no more boasting of his goodnesse & of his happy condition; no high or great thoughts of his righteousness; for all are now to be looked on as *filthy rags*, Esai 64: 6. *what things were as gaine before to the soul, must now be counted losse*, yea and as *dung* Phil. 3: 7, 8. The man must be cast downe, in himself, and far from high and conceity thoughts of himself, or of any thing he ever did, or can do: *for the Lord resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*, Jam 4: 6. 1 Pet. 5: 5. *He reviveth the spirit of the humble*. Esai 57: 15. *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted*, Mat. 18: 4, & 23: 12. Luk. 14: 11. & 18: 14.

3. There must be a *despaireing of getting help or relief* out of this condition, by our selves, or any thing we can do: a conviction of the unprofitablenesse of all things under the sun for our reliefe: No expectation of help from our supposed good heart, good purposes, good deeds, works of charity, many prayers, commendation of others, sober & harm-

harmlesse walking, or any thing else within us or without us, that is not Christ: for so long as we have the least hope or expectation of doing our owne businesse without Christ, we will never come to Him. Our heart hangeth so after the old way of salvation through works, that we cannot endure to hear of any other, nor can we yeeld to any other: could we but have heaven by the way of works; we would spare no paines, no cost, no labour, no expences; Nay we would put ourselves to much paine & torment by whippings, cuttings, fastings, watchings, and the like; we would not spare our first borne; nay, we would dig our graves in a rock with our nailes, and cut our owne dayes, could we but get heaven by this meanes: such is our antipathy at the way of salvation through a crucified Christ, that we would choose any way but that, cost what it would: therefore before we can heartily close with Christ & accept of him, we must be put from those refuges of lies, and see that there is nothing but a disappointment written on them all, that all our prayers, fastings, cries, duties, reformatiōs, sufferings, good wishes, good deeds &c. are nothing in his eyes, but so many provocations to the eyes of his jealousy, and so further causes of our misery.

4. There must be a *rational, deliberate, & resolute relinquishing of all those things in our selves, on which our hearts is ready to dote.* The Man being convinced of the vanity of all things, by which he hath been hoping for salvation, must now purpose to loose his grips off them, to turn his back upon them, to quite them with purpose of

of heart, & say to them, *get you hence*, as Esa. 30: 22. This is to *deny our selves*, which we must do, ere we become his disciples Mat. 16: 24. This is to *forsake our Fathers house* Psal. 45: 10. and to *pluck out our right eye, & to cut off our right arme*, Mat. 5: 29, 30. This abandoning of all our former false props & subterfuges must be *resolute*, over the belly of much opposition within, from the carnall & naturall inclinations of the heart; and of much opposition without, from Satan's insnaring suggestions, & deceitfull temptations; It must be a *real, rational act of the Soul*, upon solide and through conviction of their unprofitablenesse; yea of their dangerousnesse & destructivenesse.

5. There must be *some knowledge of the nature of the gospel covenant*, and of the way, which now God hath chosen, whereby to glorifie his grace in the salvation of poor sinners. That God, Father, Son, & Holy ghost thought good, for the glory of free grace, and wisdom, in a way of Justice & mercy, to send Jesus Christ to assume mans nature, and so become God & man in two distinct natures, & one person for ever; & to become under the law, to undergoe the curse thereof, and to die the cursed death of the crosse, to satisfy Justice, and to pay the ransom for the redemption of the elect. In which undertaking our Lord was a servant Esa. 42: 1. & 49: 6. & 52: 13. & 53: 11. Zech. 3: 8. Matth. 12: 18. and had furniture from God for all his undertaking Esa. 42: 1. & 61: 1, 2. Mat. 12: 18. and had a promise of *seeing his seed*, & of *prolonging his dayes* &c. Esa. 53: 10. 11. Thus there was a covenant of Redemption be-

twixt God & the Mediator : and the Mediator
 undertaking was obliged to performe all that he
 undertook, and accordingly did so: for as the Lord
 laid on him, or caused to meet together on him,
 the iniquitie of us all Esa. 53: 6. So at due time He
 beare our griefs and carryed our sorrowes; He was
 wounded for our transgressions & bruised for our
 iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon
 him; He was cut off out of the land of the li-
 ving, and stricken for the transgression of his people.
 He made his soul an offering for sin, & bear the
 iniquities of his people. Pouring out his soul unto
 death; he beare the sin of many, & made interces-
 sion for the transgressours Esa. 53: 4, 5, 8, 10, 11,
 12. So that what the law could not do, in that it
 was weak through the flesh, God sending his owne
 Son in the likenesse of sinfull flesh, for sin, (or by
 a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh Rom.
 8: 3. that the righteousnesse of the law might be
 fulfilled in us ver. 4. Thus he made him sin, (or
 a sacrifice for sin) that we might become righteous
 2 Cor. 5: 20. and he was once offered to beare the
 sinnes of many Heb. 9: 28. and he through the
 eternall spirit offered himself without spot to God
 ver. 14. and his owne self beare our sins in his owne
 body on the tree 1 Pet. 2: 24. There must, I say, be
 some knowledge of, and acquaintance with this
 great mysterie of the gospell, wherein is declared
 the manifold wisdom of God Ephel. 3: 10. and
 with the noble designe of God in sending his Son
 after this manner, to die the death, that condem-
 ned sinners might live, and returne to the bosome
 of

of God, as redeemed not with gold or silver or corruptible things; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish & without spot 1 Pet. 1: 18. and being so redeemed by blood, to become kings & priests unto God, 1 Pet. 2: 2, Revel 5: 9, 10. The man must not be ignorant of this, else all will be in vaine, I do not determine, how distinct and full this knowledge must be; but sure, there must be so much knowledge of it, as will give the soul ground of hope; and, in expectation of salvation by this way, cause it turn its back upon all other wayes, and to account itself happy, if it could once win here.

6. There must be a perswasion of the sufficiency, compleatnesse & satisfactorynesse of the way of salvation, through this crucified Mediator; else the soul will not be induced to leave its other courses, and betake it self to this alone. He must be sure, that salvation is only to be had this way. And that undoubtedly it will be had this way, that so with confidence he may cast himself over on this way, and sweetly sing in hope of a noble outgate. And therefore he must believe, that Christ is really God as well as Man, and a true Man, as well as God; that he is fully furnished for the work of Redemption, having the spirit given to him without measure; and endued fully and richly with all qualifications, fitting him for all our necessities; & enabling him to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, Heb. 7: 25; that He is made of God to us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor.

11:30. That all power in heaven & earth is given unto Him. Mat. 28:18. That all things are put under his feet, and that He is given to be the head over all things to the Church Ephes. 1:22. That in him dwelleth all fulnesse Col. 1:19. That in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom & knowledge. Col. 2:3. yea, that in him dwelleth all the fulnesse of the god-head bodyly: so that we are compleat in him, who is the head of all principality & power vers. 9, 10.

7. The soul must know, that He is not only an able & al sufficient mediator; but that also he is willing and ready, to redeem & save all that will come: for all the preceeding particulars will but increase his sorrow, and torment him more, so long as he supposeth through ignorance, & the suggestion of Satan, that he hath no part in that redemption, no access to it, no ground of hope of salvation by it. Therefore it is necessary, that the soul conceive not only a possibility; but also a probability of helpe this way; and that the dispensation of the gospel of grace, and the promulgation and offer of those good newes to him, speake out so much, that the patience of God waiting long, and his goodness renewing the offers, confirmeth this; that his serious pressing, his strong motives on the one hand, and his sharpe threatnings on the other; his reiterated commands; his ingeminated obtestations; his expressed sorrow & grief over such as would not come to him, his upbraidings & oburgations of such, as do obstinately refuse, and the like, put his willingness to save such as will come to him, out of all question: yea his obviating of objections,

and taking all excuses out of their mouth, making the case plaine and manifest; so that such as will not come, are left without excuse, and have no impediment lying in the way, but their owne unwillingnesse.

8. The man must know upon what termes & conditions Christ offereth himself in the gospel, viz. upon condition of accepting of Him, beleaving in him and resting upon him; and that no other way can we be made partakers of the good things purchased by Christ, but by accepting of Him, as he is offered in the gospel, that is to say, freely, without price or money. Esa. 55: 1. absolutely, without reservation: wholly, & for all ends. And for till this be known there will be no closeing with Christ; and till there be a closeing with Christ, there is no advantage to be had by him. The soul must be married to him as an husband; fixed to him as the branches to the tree; united to him as the members to the head; become one with him, one Spirit. 1. Cor. 6. 17. See Iohn. 15: 5. Ephes. 5: 30. The soul must close with him for all things; adhere to him upon all hazards; take him and the sharpest crosse that followeth him now I say, the soul must be acquainted with these conditions: first it must act deliberately & rationally here: Covenanting with Christ is a grave businesse & requirerh deliberation, posedenesse of soul, rationall resolution, full purpose of heart, & satisfaction of soul; and therefore the man must be acquainted with the conditions of the new covenant.

9. There must be a satisfaction with the termes of the gospel, and the heart must equally close with Christ,

in Justification.

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Christ, as he is offered in the gospel. The heart must open to him, and take him in, *Revel 3: 20.* The soul must embrace and receive him *Iob. 1: 12.* The man must take him, as his Lord and Master King, Priest & Propbet; must give up himself to him as his Leader and Commander, and resolve to follow him in all things, and thus close a bargain with him: for till this be done there is no union with Christ; And till there be an union with Christ, there is no partaking of the frutes of his redemption, as to Iustification, no pardon, no acceptance, no access to the favour of God, nor peace, nor joy in the holy ghost, no getting of the conscience sprinkled, nor no intimation of love or favour from God. &c.

10. There must be a leaning to, and resting upon him and on his perfect sacrifice. The soul must sit downe here as satisfied, and acquiesce in this compleat mediation of his. This is to believe on him, to rest on him *Iohn. 3: 18.* *1 Pet. 2: 6.* as an allsufficient help. This is to cast the burden of a brocken covenant, of a guilty conscience, of deserved wrath, of the curse of the law &c. upon Him, that He may bear away those evils from us. This is to put on the Lord Jesus (in part) *Rom. 13: 14.* to cover ourselves with his righteousness from the face of justice, to stand in this armour of proof against the accusations of Law, Satan, and an evill conscience; This is to flee to him as to our city of refuge, that we may be saife from the avenger of blood; This is to make him, our refuge from the storm of Gods anger, and, a shadow from the heat of his wrath *Esa. 25. 4.* and our hiding place

from the winde, and a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land Esai. 32: 2. When we hide ourselves in him as the compleat cautioner, that hath fully satisfied justice, and desire to be found in him alone, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Phil. 3: 9. This is to lay our hand on the head of the sacrifice, when we rest on this sacrifice, and expect salvation through it alone. This is to cast ourselves in Christs armes, as peremptorily resolving to goe no other way to the Father, and to plead no other righteousness before Gods barr, but Christs. That is faith, yea the lively acting of Iustifying faith.

Thus then is Christ made use of, as the way to the Father, in the point of Iustification, when the poor awakened sinner, convinced of his sin and misery, of his owne inability to help himself, of the insufficiency of all meanes beside Christ; of Christs sufficiency, readinesse, and willingnesse to helpe, of the equitie and reasonablenesse of the conditions on which he is offered, and life through him, is now content, and fully satisfied with this way, actually renouncing all other wayes whatsoever, and doth with heart, and hand embrace Iesus Christ, & take him as he is offered in the gospel, to make use of him for all things, to leane to him, and rest upon him in all hazards; and particularly to refuge it self vnder his wings, and to rest there with complacency, satisfaction, & delight; and hide it self from the wrath of God, & all accusations.

Yet it would be knowne, that this act of faith, whe-

whereby the soul goeth out to Christ, and accepteth of and leaneth to him, is not alike in all: for,

1. In Some it way be more *lively, strong & active*, like the *centurions* faith, that could argue syllogistically. Matth. 8: 8, &c. which Christ looked upon as a great faith, a greater whereof he had not found, no nor in Israel vers. 10. and like the faith of the *woman of Canaan* Mat. 15: 21. &c. that would take no nay say, but of seeming refusals did make arguments, which Christ commended as a great faith vers. 28. But in others, it may be more weak, and fainting, not able to reason aright for its owne comfort and strength, as Mat. 8: 30. but is mixed with much feare, as Math. 8: 26. yea and with much faithlesnesse, so that the soul must cry, *Lord helpe my unbelief* Mark 9: 24.

2. In some, the acts and actings of this faith may be more clear, and discernable; both by themselves, and by spirituall on-lookers: In others so covered over with an heape of doubts, unbelief, jealousie, & other corruption, that the actings of it can hardly, or not at all, be perceived by themselves or others, so that nothing shall be heard but complaints, feares, doubtings, and objections.

3. In some, this faith may have strong, and perceptible actings, wreatsting thorow much discouragement and opposition, and many difficulties; as in that woman of Canaan Matth. 15. roning thorow with peremptory resolutenesse; saying with Job. Cap. 13. 15. *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, and thus taking the kingdome of heaven with violence. In others it may be so weak, that the least

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opposition or discouragement may be sufficient to make the soul give over hope, & almost dispaire of overcoming and wining thorow: & be as a bruised reed, or a smoking flax.

4. In some, though it appeare not strong, & violent or wilfull (in a manner) in its actings; yet it may be *firme, fixed, & resolute*, in staying upon Him, Esa. 26: 3, 4. and trusting in Him. Psal. 125. 1. resolving to hing there, and if it perish It perisheth. In others weak, & bashful.

5. In some, it may be yet weaker, going out in *strong & vehement hungerings*, Mat. 5: 6. The man dar not say, that he doth beleeve, or that he doth adhere to Christ, and stay upon him; yet he dar say, he longeth for him, and panteth after Him, as ever *the hart doth after the watter brooks* Psal. 42: 1, 2. he hungereth and thirsteth for him; and cannot be satisfied with any thing without him.

6. in some, it may be that weak, that the soul can only perceive *the heart looking out after Him*: upon little more ground, than a *may be* it shall be helped Esa. 45: 22. They look to Him for salvation, being convinced that there is no other way, and resolved to follow no other way, they resolve to lye at his doer, waiting and looking for a sight of the kings face, and to lye there waiting till they die, if no better may be.

7. In some, it may be so weak, that nothing more can be perceived, but a *satisfaction with the tearmes of the covenant*, a willingnesse to accept of the bargane, and an heart consenting thereunto, though they dar not say, that they actually close therewith, yea nor dar say, that they shall be welcome Revel. 22: 17.

8. In

3. In some, it may be so weak and low, that they cannot say, that they have any right hunger or desire after Him, nor that their heart doth rightly and really consent to the covenant of grace; yet they would faine be at it, and cry out oh for a willing heart. O for ardent desires! O for a right hunger! and they are dissatisfied and cannot be reconciled with their hearts, for not desiring more, hungering more, consenting more; so that if they had this, they would think themselves happy and upmade. And thus we see their faith is so low, that it appeareth in nothing more manifestly, than in their complainings of the want of it.

So then the poor weak believer needeth not be so far discouraged, as to dispaire and give over the matter as hopelesse & lost: let him hang on, depend, and waite; a weak faith to day may become stronger within a short time. He that laid the foundation, can and will finish the building, for all *his Works are perfect*. And a weak faith, when true, will prove saving, and lay hold on a saving strong Mediator.

Moreover, as to the acting of faith on *Christ's death and sacrifice*; for stopping the mouth of *Conscience*, *Law*, *Satan*, and for opposing to the pursuing Justice of God because of sin. It may some times be *strong, distinct, clear and resolute*. At other times againe be *weak, mixed, or accompanied with much feare, perplexity doubting, and distrust*, because of their owne seen unworthinesse, many failings, doubtings of the sincerity of their repentance, and the like.

This is a maine businelle, and of great concernment, yet many are not much troubled about it, nor exercised at the heart hereabout, as they ought, deceiving themselves with foolish imaginations, for

1. They think, they were beleevers all their dayes, they never doubted of Gods grace and goodwill, they had alwayes a good heart for God, though they never knew what a wakened conscience, or sence of the wrath of God meant.

2. Or they think, because God is mercifull, he will not be so severe, as to stand upon all those things, that Ministers require; forgetting that He is a just God, and a God of truth, that will do according to what He hath said.

3. Or they suppose, it is an easie matter to beleeve, & not such a difficult thing as it is called: not considering or beleeving, that no lesse power, than that, which raised Christ againe from the dead, will worke up the heart unto faith.

4. Or they resolve that they will do it afterward, at some more convenient season; not perceiving the cunning slight of Satan in this, nor considering that faith is not in their power, but the gift of God; and that if they lay not hold on the call of God, but harden their heart in their day, God may judicially blinde them, so that these things shall be hid from their eyes; and so that occasion, they pretend to waite for, never come.

Oh if such, whom this mainly concerneth, could be induced to enter into this way, considering.

1 That except they enter into this way, they
cannot

cannot be saife the wrath of God will pursue them, the avenger of blood will overtake them; no Salvation but here.

2. That *in this way is certaine Salvation*; this way will infallibly lead to the Father; for he keepeth in the way and bringeth saife home Exod. 23 : 10.

2. Its *the old path, and the good way*, Ier. 6 : 16. all the saints have the experience of this, who are already come to glory : and.

4. It is a *high way, and a way of righteousness*, wherein if very fools walk, they shall not wander, Elai. 35 : 8, 9 and if the weak walk in it, they shall not fainte Elai. 40 : 31.

5. That except this be done, there is no advantage to be had by Him, His death & all his sufferings, as to those persons that will not beleve and enter into him as the way to the Father, are in vaine.

6. Yea, such as will not beleve in Him, say in effect, either that Christ hath not died nor consecrated away through the veile of his flesh : or that all that He hath done & suffered is not sufficient for bringing a soul home to God : or that they can do their owne businesse without him. and that it was a foolish and vaine thing for Christ to die the death for that end : or lastly that they care not for salvation, they are indifferent whether they perish, or be saved :

7. That, as to them, the whole gospel is in vaine, all the ordinances, all the administration of ordinances, all the paines of Ministers are in vaine.

8. That, as to them, all Christs intreaties, motives, allurements, patience and long suffering, his standing at the door and knocking, till his locks

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be wet with the dew &c. are in vaine: yea, they are contemptuously rejected, despised, slighted, & undervalued.

9. That all the great promises are by such rejected as untrue, or as not worthy the seeking or having; and that all the threatnings on the other hand, are not to be regarded or feared.

10. In a word. That heaven, and the fellowship of God is not worth the seeking, and that hell and the fellowship of devils is not worth the fearing. Or that there is neither a heaven, nor a hell: and that all are but fictions: and that there is no such thing as the wrath of God against sinners, or that it is not much to be feared.

If it be asked, what warrant have poor sinners to lay hold on Christ, and gripe to him, as made of God righteousness?

I answer, Our absolute necessity of him, is a ground to presse us to go and seek help and reliefe: we see we are gone in ourselves, and therefore are we allowed to seek out for help elsewhere.

2. Christ's al sufficient furniture, whereby he is a qualified mediator, fitted with all necessaries for our case & condition, having laid downe a price to the satisfaction of justice, is a sufficient invitation for us to look toward him for helpe, and to wait at that door.

3. His being appointed of the Father, to be mediator of the covenant, and particularly to lay down his life a ransom for sin; and Christs undertaking all his offices, and performing all the duties thereof, conforme to the covenant of redemption, is a strong encouragement to poor sinners

to come to Him; because He cannot deny himself, and he will be true to his trust.

4. The Fathers offering of him to us in the gospel, and Christs inviteing us, who are weary, and heavy laden; yea calling and commanding such to come to him, in his owne, and in his Fathers name, under the paine of his and his Fathers wrath and everlasting displeasure; exhorting further and requesting upon tearmes of love, pressing earnestly by many motives, sending out his ambassadours to beseech, in his stead, poor sinners to be reconciled, and to come in to him for life and salvation: yea upbraiding such as will not come to him: all these are a sufficient warrant for a poor necessitous sinner to lay hold on his offer.

And further, to encourage poor souls to come unto him, all things are so well ordered in the gospel as that nothing occurreth, that can in the least prove a stumbling block, or a just ground of excuse, for their forbearing to beleeve, and to accept of his offer: all objections possible are obviated to such, as are but willing, as the way is cast up; and all stones of stumbling cast out of it; so that such as will not come can pretend no excuse. They cannot object *the greatnesse of their sins*; for the greater their sins be, they have the greater need of one who is sent to take away sin, and whose blood purgeth from all sin, 1 Joh: 1. 7. what great sinner did he ever refuse, that came to him; and was willing to be saved by him? Is there any clause in all the gospel excluding great sinners? Nor need they object, *their great unworthinesse*; for he doth all freely for the glory of his free grace: no-

Yet got any good of him for their worth: for no man ever had any worth. Nor need they object their long refusing, and resisting many calls: for he will make such as are willing welcome at the Eleventh houre. Him that cometh he will in no case put away Ioh. 6: 37. Nor can they object their changeablenesse, that they will not stand to the bargan, but break and returne with the dog to the vomire: for Christ hath engaged to bring all thorow that cometh to him, He will raise them up at the last day, Joh. 6: 40. He will present them to himself holy and without spote or wrinkle, or any such thing, Ephes. 5. The covenant is fully provided with promises to stoppe the mouth of that objection. Nor can they object the difficulty, or impossibility of beleeving: for that is Christs work also. He is the author and finisher of faith Heb. 12: 1. Can they not with confidence cast themselves upon him; yet if they can hunger and thirst for him, and look to him, he will accept of that: *look to me* (sayes he) *and be saved* Isa. 45: 22. If they cannot look to him, nor hunger & thirst for him; yet if they be willing, all is well: are they willing that Christ save them in his way, and therefore willingly give themselves over to him, and are willing and content, that Christ by his spirit work more hunger in them, and a more lively faith, and *work both to will and to do according to his owne good pleasure*, it is well.

But it will be said, that the termes and conditions, on which he offereth himself, are hard. *Ans.* I grant the termes are hard to flesh and blood, and to proud unmortified nature; but to such as are willing

willing to be saved, so as God may be most glorified, the termes are easie, most rationall and satisfying: for.

1. We are required to take *Him only* for our mediator, and to joyne none with him, and to mix nothing with him. Corrupt nature is averse from this, and would at least mix something of self with him, and not rest on Christ only: corrupt nature would not have the man wholly denying himself, and following Christ only: and hence many lose themselves and lose all; because with the *Gallatians* they would mix the law and the gospel together; do something themselves for satisfaction of justice, & take Christ for the rest that remaines. Now the Lord will have all the glory, as good reason is, & will have none to share with him. He will give of his glory to none. And is not this rationall and easy? What can be objected against this?

2. We are required to take him *Wholly*, that He may be a compleat Mediator to us, as a *Prophet* to teach, as a *King* to subdue our lusts, to cause us walk in his wayes, as well as a *Priest* to satisfie justice for us, to die & intercede for us. Is it not reason, that we take him as God hath made him for us? Is there any thing in him to be refused? And is there any thing in Him, which we have no need of? Is there not all the reason then in the world for this, that we take Him wholly, and what stumbling block is here?

3. We are required to take Him *Freely*, without money and witho^{ut} price. *Esa. 55. 1.* for He will not be bought any manner of way: that free grace may be free grace, therefore he will give all freely.

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True enough it is, corruption would be at buying, though it have nothing to lay out: Pride will not stoop to a free gift. But can any say the terms are hard, when all is offered freely?

4. We are required to take him *absolutely*, without any reversion or mentall reservation. Some would willingly quite all, but one or two lusts, that they cannot think to winne with: and they would deny themselves in many things, but they would still most willingly keep a back door open to some beloved lust, or other. And who seeth not what double dealing is here? And what reason can plead for this double dealing? Corruption, it is true, will think this hard, but no man can rationally say, that this is a just ground of discouragement, to any; or a sufficient ground to warrant them to stay away from Christ, seeing they cannot be supposed sincerely to desire redemption from any sin, who would not desire redemption from every sin. He who loveth any known lust, and would not willingly be delivered therefrom, hath no real hatred at any lust, as such; nor desire to be saved; for one such lust would be his death.

5. It is required, that we accept of Him really and cordially, with our heart and soul, and not by a meer externall verbal profession: and is there not all the reason in the world for this? He offereth Himself really to us, and shall we not be real in accepting of Him? what, I pray, can justly be excepted against this? or what real discouragement can any gather from this?

6. We are to take Him for all necessities, that is, with a resolution to make use of Him as not
all sufficient

allsufficient Mediator. And is not this most reasonable? Ought we not to take Him for all the ends and purposes, for which God hath appointed Him, and set Him forth, and offered Him to us? What then can any suppose to lie here, which should scarse a soul from laying hold upon Him? Nay should not this be looked upon as a very great encouragement? And should we not blesse the Lord, that hath provided such a compleet and allsufficient Mediator?

7. We are to take Him, and all the crosses, that may attend our taking or following of Him: we must take up our crosse, be it what it will be, that He thinketh good to appoint for us, and follow Him. Matth. 16: 24. Mark 8: 34. for he that taketh not up his crosse, and followeth not after Him, is not worthy of Him. Mat. 10: 38. I know, flesh and blood will take this for a hard saying; but they, that consider, that Christ will beare the heaviest end of the crosse, yea all of it, and so support, them by his Spirit, while they are under it, that they shall have no just cause to compleane; and how He will suffer none to goe his errand, upon their owne charges, but will be with them, when they goe through fire and water, Elai. 43: 2. so that they shall suffer no losse, neither shall the waters overflow them; nor the fire kindle upon them: and that he who loseth his life, for Christ's sake, for the gospels, shall save it. Mark. 8: 35. yea, that they shall receive an hundredfold for all their losses. Matth. 19: 29. and that even with persecution, Mark. 10. 30. and in the world to come eternall life. They, I say, who consider this, will
see

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see no discouragement here, nor ground of complaint; nay, they will account it their glory to suffer any losse for Christ's sake.

8. Hence it followeth, that we are to take Him, so as to avouch Him, and his cause, and interest, on all hazards, stand to his truth, and not be ashamed of Him, in a day of tryall. Confession of Him must be made with the mouth, as with the heart we must beleeve Ro. 10:9. Let corruption speak against this what it will, because it is alwayes desirous to keep the skinne whole: yet reason cannot but say, that it is equitable, especially, seeing He hath said, that *whosoever confesseth Him before men, He will confesse them before his Father which is in heaven.* Mar. 10. 32. And that, if we suffer with Him, we shall also reigne with Him. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Is He our Lord and Master, and should we not owne and avouch Him? Should we be ashamed of him for any thing, that can befall us, upon that account? What Master would not take that ill at his servants hands?

Hence then we see, that there is nothing in all the conditions, on which He offereth Himself to us, that can give the least ground, in reason, why a poor soul should draw back, and be unwilling to accept of this noble offer, or think that the conditions are hard.

But there is one maine Objection, which may trouble some, and that is. They cannot beleeve faith being the gift of God, it must be wrought in them; How then can they goe to God for this, and make use of Christ for this end, that their souls may be wrought up to a beleeving & consenting to

the bargan and hearty accepting of the offer?

To this I would say these things.

1. It is true, that *faith is the gift of God*. Ephes. 2: 8. and that it is *He alone who worketh in us, both to will & to do* Phil. 1: 29, and none cometh to the son, but whom the father draweth John. 6: 44. and it is a great matter, and no small advancement, to win to the real faith, and through conviction of this our impotency: for thereby the soul will be brought to a greater measure of humiliation, and of despairing of salvation in it self, which is no small advantage unto a poor soul that would be saved.

2. Though faith be not in our power, yet it is *our duty*: Our impotency to performe our duty, doth not loose our obligation to the duty; so that our not beleeving is our sin; and for this God may justly condemne us. His wrath abideth on all, who beleeve not in his Son Jesus, and will not accept of the offer of salvation through the crucified mediator. And though faith, as all other acts of grace, be efficiently the work of the Spirit, yet it is formally our work; we do beleeve; but it is the Spirit that worketh faith in us.

3. The ordinary way of the *Spirit's working faith in us*, is by pressing home the duty upon us, whereby we are brought to a despairing in ourselves and to a looking out to Him, whose grace alone it is that can work it in the soul, for that necessary help and breathing, without which the soul will not come.

4. Christ Jesus hath purchased this grace of faith, to all the elect, as other graces necessary to
their

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their salvation: and it is promised and covenanted to Him; that *He shall see his seed*, and shall see of *the travell of his soull* *Eesai. 53: 10, 11.* and that by the knowledge of him, that is, the rationall and understanding act of the soull griping to and laying hold upon Him, as he is offered in the gospel, *many shall be justified: Ibid.* Hence he sayeth, *that all, whom the father hath given to Him, shall come unto Him, Iohn. 6: 37,* and the Apostle tells us, *that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Him, Ephel. 1: 3.*

5. Not only hath Christ purchased this grace of faith, and all other graces necessary for the salvation of the elect; but God hath committed to Him the administration and actuall dispensation and outgiving of all those graces, which the redeemed stand in need of. Hence, *He is a Prince exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sinns Act. 5: 31,* all power in heaven and earth is committed unto him. *Mat. 28: 18: 19.* Hence, He is called the *author and finisher of faith* *Heb. 12: v. 2.* and He telleth his disciples *Iohn. 14: 13, 14.* That whatsoever they shall ask in his name, He will do it. He is made Prince and a Saviour, having all judgment committed unto him. *Iohn. 5: 22.* and He is Lord of all *Act. 10: 36. Rom. 14: 9.*

6. Hereupon, the sinner being convinced of his lost condition, through sin and misery: of an utter impossibility of helping himself out of that state of death: of Christ's alfsufficiency, and willingnesse to save all that will come to Him; and of its owne inability to beleve or come to Him for life and salvation; or to lay hold on and leane to his merites

and

and satisfaction, and so despairing in himself, is to look out to Iesus the author of eternall salvation, the foundation and chiefe corner stone, the author and finisher of faith. I say, the sinner, being thus convinced, is thus to look out to Iesus, nor that, that conviction is any proper qualification, prerequisite as necessary, either to prepare, dispose, and fit for faith, or, far lesse, to merite, any manner of way, or bring on faith; But because this is Christ's method to bring a soul to faith by this conviction, to the glory of his grace. The soul naturally being averse from Christ, and utterly unwilling to accept of that way of salvation, must be reduced to that strait, that it shal see, that it must either accept of this offer, or die: as the whole needeth not a physician; so Christ is come to save only that which is lost: and his method is to convince the world of sin, in the first place, and then of righteousness Iohn. 16: 8, 9.

7. This looking out to Iesus for faith, comprehendeth those things 1. The Souls acknowledgement of the necessitie of faith, to the end it may partake of Christ, and of his merites. 2. The souls satisfaction with that way of partaking of Christ; by a closeing with Him, and a resting upon Him, by faith 3. A sense and conviction of the unbeleeve and stubbornnesse of the heart; or a seeing of its own impotency, yea and unwillingnesse to beleve 4. A persuasion that Christ can overmaster the infidelity, & wickednesse of the heart, and worke up the soul to a willing consent unto the bargaine. 5. A hope, or a halfe hope (to speak so) that Christ, who is willing

to save all poor sinners, that come to Him for salvation, and hath said, that He will put none away in any case, that cometh, will have pity upon him at length. 6. A resolution to be at his door, till he come with life, till He quicken, till He unite the soul to Himself.

7. A lying open to the breathings of his Spirit, by guarding against every thing (so far as they can) that may grieve or provok Him, and waiting on Him in all the ordinances, He hath appointed, for begetting of faith; such as reading the scriptures, hearing the word, conference with godly persons, and prayer &c. 8. A waiting with patience on Him, who never said to the house of Jacob, *seek me, in vaine*, Esai. 45: 19. still crying, and looking to Him, who hath commanded the ends of the earth to look to him; and waiting for him, *who waiteth to be gracious*, Esai. 30: 18. remembering that they are all *blessed that waite for him*, Ibid. and that there is much good prepared for them, *that waite for Him*, Esai. 64: 4.

8. The sinner would *essay this beleaving*, and *closeing with Christ*, and set about it, as he can, seriously, heartily, & willingly, yea and resolutely over the belly of much opposition, and many discouragements, looking to Him, who must helpe, yea and worke the whole work: for God worketh in and with Man, as a rationall creature. The soul then would set the willingnesse it findeth on work, & waite for more; and as the Lord is pleased to commend, by his Spirit, the way of grace more unto the soul, and to warme the heart with love to it and a desire after it, *strike the yron while it is*

hote

hote; and looking to Him for help, gripe to Christ in the covenant: and so set to its seal, though with a trembling hand; and subscribe its name, though with fear and much doubting, remembering that He who worketh to will, must work the deed also Phil. 2: 13, and He that beginneth a good work will perfect it, Phil. 1: 6.

9. The soul essaying thus to beleefe, in Christ's strength, and to creep when it can not walk or run, would hold fast what it hath attained, and resolve never to recall any consent, or half consent, it hath given to the bargaine, but still look forward, hold on, wrestle against unbeleefe, and unwillingnesse; intertaine every good motion of the Spirit for this end, and never admit of any thing, that may quench its longings, desires, or expectation.

May 10. If the sinner be come this length, that with the bit willingnesse he hath, he consenteth to the bargaine, & is not satisfied with any thing in himself, that draweth back, or consenteth not, & with the little skill or strength he hath is writing downe his name, and saying even so I take Him. and is holding at this, peremptorily resolving, never to goe backe, or unsay what he hath said; but on the contrarie, is firmly purposed to adhere, &, as he groweth in strength, to gripe more firmly, and adhere to Him, he may conclude, that *the bargain is closed already*, and that *he hath saith already*: for, here ther is an accepting of Christ on his owne termes, a reall consenting unto the covenant of grace, though weak, and not so discernable, as the soul would wish. The soul dar-
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not say, but it loveth the bargaine, and is satisfied with it, and longeth for it, and desireth nothing more than that it might partake thereof, and enjoy Him whom it loveth, hungereth for, pants after, or breatheth, as it is able, that it may live in Him, & be saved through Him.

But *Some will say*, If I had any evidence of God's approbation of this act of my soul, any testimony of his Spirit, I could then with confidence say, that I had beleaved & accepted of the covenant and of Christ offered therein: but so long as I perceive nothing of this, how can I suppose, that any motion of this kinde in my soul, is real faith?

For *answere*. 1. We would know, that our beleaving, and God's sealing to our sense are two distinct acts, and separable, and oft separated: our beleaving is one thing, and God's sealing with the holy Spirit of promise to our sense, is another thing, and this followeth though not inseparably the other Eph. 1: 13. — *In whom also, after that ye beleaved, yee were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.*

And so, 2. We would know, that Many a man may beleave & yet not know that he doth beleave; He may set to his seal, that God is true, in his offer of life through Iesus, and accept of that offer as a truth, and close with it, and yet live under darknesse & doubtings of his faith, long & many aday; partly through not discerning the true nature of faith; partly through the great sense and feeling of his owne corruption and unbeleefe; partly through a mistake of the operations of the spirit within, or the want of a clear & distinct uptaking

of the motions of his owne soul; *Partly* because he findeth so much doubting and feare, as if there could be no faith, where there were doubting on fear, contrare to Mark. 9: 24. Mat. 8: 26. & 14: 31. *Partly* because he hath not that perswasion, that others have had, as if there were not various degrees of faith, as there is of other graces, & the like.

Therefore 3. We would know, that many may really beleeve, and yet misse this sensible sealing of the Spirit which they would beare; God may think it not yet seasonable to grant them that, lest they forget themselves and become too proud, and to traine them up more to the life of faith, whereby He may be glorified; and for other holy ends, He may suspend the giving of this for a time.

4. Yet we would know, that all that beleeve, have the seal within them 1. John. 5: 10. *He that beleeueth on the Son of God, hath the witnesse in himself. that is,* He hath that which really is a seal, though he see it not, nor perceive it not; even the work of God's spirit in his soul, inclining and determining him unto the accepting of this bursan, & to a likeing of & endeavouring after holinesse; and the whole gospel clearing up what faith is, is a seal & confirmation of the businesse. So that the matter is sealed, and confirmed by the word, though the soul want those sensible breathings of the Spirit, shedding abroad his love in the heart, and filling the soul with a full assurance, by hushing all doubts and feares to the door; yea though they should be a stranger unto the Spirits witnessing thus

thus with their spirits, that they are the children of God; and clearing up distinctly the real work of grace within their soul, and so saying in effect, that they have in truth beleev'd.

But enough of this, seeing all this and much more is abundantly held forth and explained, in that excellent & usefull treatise of Mr. *Guthrie* intituled *The Christians great interest*.

CHAP. V.

How Christ is to be made use of, as the Way, for Sanctification, in generall.

HAVING shown how a poor soul, lying under the burden of sin & wrath, is to make use of Iesus Christ, for *righteousnesse & justification*, and so to make use of Him, goe out to Him, and apply Him, as He is made of God to us *righteousnesse* 1. Cor. 1: v. 30. and that but briefly; this whole great businesse being more fully, and satisfactorily handled, in the fore mentioned great, though small Treatise, viz *The Christians great Interest*. We shall now come and show, how a beleever or a justified soul shall further make use of Christ, for *Sanctification*, this being a particular, about which, they are oftentimes much exercised and perplexed.

That we may therefore, in some weak measure, through the helpe of His light and grace, pro-

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pose some things to cleare up this great and necessary truth. we shall first speak a little to it, in the generall, and then come to cleare up the matter more particularly.

Before we speak of the matter in generall, it would be remembered, first, That the person who only is in case to make use of Christ for *Sanctification*, is one, that hath made use of Him already for *Righteousnesses justification*: for one who is a stranger to Christ, and is living in nature, hath no access to Christ for sanctification. He must be a believer and within the covenant, ere he can make use of the grounds of sanctification, laid down in the covenant. One must first be united to Christ, and justified by faith in Him, before he can draw any vertue from Him for perfecting holiness. He must first *be in Him*, before he can *grow up in Him*, or *bring forth fruit in Him*. And therefore the first thing that souls would goe about, should be to get an iniquity made up with Christ, and be clothed with his righteousness by faith, and then they have a right to all his benefits: first they should labour to get their state changed from enmity, to peace & reconciliation with God, through faith in Jesus.

Yet, next, it would be observed. That when it is said, that one must be a believer, before he can go to Christ, & make use of Him for holiness & sanctification, it is not so understood, or said. That one must know, that indeed he is justified by faith, before he can make any use of Christ for sanctification. One may be justified, and a believer, yea and growing in grace through Jesus Christ, and so

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actually improving the grounds of sanctification, and making use of Christ for this end, and allowed thereunto, and yet win to no certainty, of his union with Christ, of his justification through faith in Him, nor of his faith.

But *thirdly*, if it be said, How can a soul with confidence approach to Christ, for usemaking of Him, in reference to sanctification; that is the doubting of his state and regeneration? I answer. It is true, a clear sight of our interest in Christ by faith, would be a great encouragement to our confident approaching to, and usemaking of Him, in all things; and this consideration should move all, to a more earnest search & study of the marks & evidences of their Interest; a good help wherunto they will finde in the forementioned book. I shall only say this here. That if the soul, have an earnest desire, to be sanctified wholly, and to have on the image of God, that he may glorifie Him, and panteth after holinesse, as for life, that he may look like Him, who is holy, & maketh this his work and study; sorrowing at nothing more than at his short coming; crying out and longing for the day, when he shall be delivered from a body of death, and have the old man wholly crucified; he needeth not question his interest in Christ, & warrant to make use of Him, for every part of sanctification; for this longing desire after conformity to Gods law, and panting after this spiritual life, to the end God may be exalted, Christ glorified, & others edified; will not be readily found, in one that is yet in nature. It is true, I grant, some who design to establish their owne righteousness; and

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to be justified by their owne works & inherent holiness, may wish, that they might be more holy and lesse guilty: and for some other corrupt ends, they may desire to be free of the power of some lust, which they finde noxious & troublesome; and yet retain with love and desire, some other beloved lust; and so have a heart still cleaving to the heart of some detestable thing or other: But gracious souls, as they have respect to all the commands of God; so they have not that designe of being justified before God by their works; nor do they study mortification, or sanctification for any such end; nay, they no sooner discover any byas of their false deceitfull hearts unto any such end, but as soon, they disowne it, and abhorre it. So that hence believers may get some discovery of the reality of their faith, and interest in Christ, and of their warrant, yea & duty to make use of Christ for sanctification.

Thus premised, we come to speak some thing, in the generall, of beleevers usemaking of Christ, as made of God to us *Sanctification*: and for this end, we shall only speak a little to two things. *first* we shall show, upon what account it is, that Christ is called our *sanctification*, or made of God to us *sanctification*, as the Apostle's phrase is 1. Cor. 1: 30. or what Christ hath done, as Mediator, to beginne, & carry on to perfection, the work of sanctification in the soul. And *secondly*, How the soul is to demean it self in this matter, or how the soul is to make use of, & improve, what Christ hath done, for this end, that it may grow in grace and perfect holiness in the fear of God.

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As to the first, we would know, that though the work of sanctification be formally ours; yet it is wrought by another hand, as the principal efficient cause; even by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Father is said to purge the branches, that they may bring forth more fruit John. 15: 1. 2. hence, we are said to be sanctified by God the Father, Jud. vers. 1. The Son is also called the sanctifier Heb. 2: 21. He sanctifieth & cleanseth the Church, with the washing of water by the word Ephes. 5: 26. The Spirit is also said to sanctifie 2. Thes. 2: 13. 1 Pet. 1: 2. Rom. 15: 16. Hence we are said to be washed & sanctified by the Spirit of God 1 Cor. 6: 11.

But more particularly, we are said to be sanctified in Christ. 1. Cor. 1. 2. and He is made of God to us sanctification 1 Cor. 1. 30. let us then see, in what sense this may be true: and

1. He hath by his death & blood procured that this work of sanctification shall be wrought, & carryed on: for he suffered without the gate, that He might Sanctifie the people with his owne blood Heb. 13: 12. we are saved by the washing of regeneration, & renewing of the holy ghost, which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Tit. 3: 5, 6. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Tit. 2: 14. Thus our sanctification is the fruit of his death, & purchased by his blood. He gave himself for his church, that he might sanctifie it Ephes. 5: 25, 26.

2. He dying as a cautioner & publick person, beleevers

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believers are accounted in law to be dead to sin, in Him. Hence the Apostle tells us, Rom. 6: 3, 4, 5, 6. that as many of us as are Baptized into Iesus Christ were Baptized into his death; and that therefore we are buried with Him by baptisme into death; and are planted together in the likenesse of his death; yea and that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that hence forth we should not serve sin: whence believers are warranted & commanded vers. 11. to reckon themselves to be dead indeed unto sin: and therefore sin should not reigne in their mortall bodies, to fulfill the lusts thereof vers. 12. This is a sure ground of hope & comfort for believers, that Christ dyed thus, as a publick person; and that by vertue thereof, being now united to Christ by faith, they are dead unto sin by law; and sin can not challenge a dominion over them, as before their conversion it might have done, and did; for the law hath dominion over a man, as long as he liveth, but no longer: wherefore believing brethren, becoming dead to the law by the body of Christ, are married to another, even to Him, who is raised from the dead, that they should bring forth fruit unto God Rom. 7: 1, 4.

3. Hence it followeth, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed Rom. 6: 6. So that this old tyrant, that oppresseth the people of God, hath got his deaths wounds, in the crucifixion of Christ, & shall never recover his former vigour & activity, to oppress & beare down the people of God, as he did: He is now virtually, through the death of Iesus,

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killed, & crucified, being in Christ, nailed to the
crosse.

4. His resurrection is a paune & pledge of this
sanctification: for, as He died as a publick person,
so He rose againe as a publick person: *we are buryed
with Him by baptisme, that likeas Christ was raised
up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even
so we also should walk in newnesse of life. Rom.
6: 4. and believers are said to be planted together
with him, in the likenesse of his resurrection vers. 3.
and they shall live with Him. vers. 8. and therefore
they are to reckon themselves, alive unto God,
through Iesus Christ our Lord, verse. 11. we are
raised up together Ephes. 2: 6.*

5. This sanctification is an article of the cove-
nant of redemption, betwixt the Father & the Son
Esa. 52: 15. *so shall he sprinkle many nations: &
Cap. 53: 10. He shall see his seed, and the plea-
sure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* Christ
then having this promised to Him, must see to
the accomplishment thereof, and will have it
granted to him; seing He hath fulfilled all that
was engaged to by Him, having made his soul an
offering for sin.

6. This sanctification is promised in the cove-
nant of grace. Ier. 33. 8. *& I will cleanse them
from all their iniquity Ezech 37: 23. ———
and I will cleanse them. So Chap. 36: 25. Then
will I sprinkle cleane water upon you, & yet shall
be cleane. from all your filthinesse, & from all
your idols will I cleanse you.* Now all the promises of
the covenant of grace are confirmed to us in the

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Mediator: for in Him all the promises are yea & amen 2. Cor. 1: 20.

7. He hath also purchased & made sure to his owne, the new nature, and the heart of flesh, which is also promised Ezech. 36: 26. & 11. 19. Jer. 32. 39. This is the new & lively principle of grace, the spring of sanctification, which cannot be idle in the soul; but must be emitting vitall acts natively.

Yea, through Him, are beleeyers made partakers of the divine nature, which is a growing thing; young glory in the soul. 2. Pet. 2: 3. 4. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things, that pertaine unto life & godlinesse, through the knowledge of Him, that hath called us to glory & virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great & precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature. &c.

8. The Spirit is promised, to cause us walk in his statutes Ezech. 36: 27. Now all these promises are made good to us in Christ, who is the cautioner of the covenant: yea He hath gotten now the dispensing and giving out of the rich promises of the covenant, committed unto Him; so as He is the great Lord, treasurer and administrator of the great & glorious purchased blessings.

9. There are new waterings, breathings, & gales of the Spirit, given in Christ. Esai. 27: 3. He must water his garden or vineyard every moment. This is the north winde, & the south winde that bloweth upon the garden Cant. 4: 16. He must bear the dew unto Israel. Hos. 14: 5.

10. Through Christ is the beleever brought into such

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such a covenant state, as giveth great ground of hope of certane victory. He is not now under the law but under grace; and hence inferreth the Apostle Rom. 6: 14. That *sin shall not have dominion over them.* Being now under that dispensation of grace, whereby all their stock, is in the Mediators hand, & at his disposall; and not in their own hand & power, as under the covenant of works, there is a sure ground laid down for constant supply & furniture, in all necessities.

11. Christ hath prayed for this. *John. 17: 17. Sanctifie them through thy truth.* where the Lord is praying, that his disciples might be more & more sanctified, and so fitted & qualified for the work of the ministrie; they were to be employed in. And what He prayed for them, was not for them alone, but also for all the elect, proportionably, who are opposed to the world, for which He did not pray v. 9.

12. He standeth in relation to beleevers of a Vine, or a Root, in which they grow as branches, so that by abiding in Him, living by faith in Him, and drawing sap from him, they bring forth fruit in Him *John. 15: 1, 2, 4, 5.* Their stock of grace is in Him, the root; and He communicateth sap and life unto his branches, whereby they grow, flourish, and bring forth fruit to the glory of God.

13. Christ hath taken on Him the office of a Prophet and Teacher, to instruct us in the way, wherein we ought to goe: for He is that great Prophet, whom the Lord promised to raise up, and who was to be heard and obeyed in all things *Deut. 18: 15. Aft. 3: 22, and 7: 37.* He is given for a

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1. *Witness* & a leader, *Eesai*. 55:4. and we are com-
manded to hear Him *Mat.* 17:5. *Mark.* 10:7.

14. He hath also taken on Him the office of a
King *Psal.* 2:6. *Mat.* 21:5. *Eesai* 9:6, 7. *Phil.*
2:8, 9, 10, 11. and thereby standeth engaged to
labdure all their spirituall enemies, Satan & corrup-
tion: *Psal.* 110. He is given for a leader and com-
mander. *Eesai.* 55:4. and so can cause his people
walk in his wayes.

15. When we defile ourselves with new trans-
gressions & failings. He hath provided a fountaine
for us to wash in; a fountaine opened to the house of
David & to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin &
for uncleannesse *Zech.* 13:1. and this fountaine is
his blood which cleanseth from all sin *Heb.* 9:14
1. *Iohn.* 1:7. *Revel.* 1:5.

16. He is set before us, as a copie & patterne
that we should walk even as He walked. 1. *Ioh.* 2:6.
He left us an example, that we should follow his
steps. 1. *Pet.* 2:21. But we would beware to
separate this consideration from the preceeding, as
Antichristian Socinians do, who will have Christ
only to be a copie.

17. He hath overcome Satan our arch-enemies
and hath destroyed his works. 1. *Iohn.* 3:8. He
came to destroy the works of the devill. And in
particular his works of wickednesse in the soule.
Thus He is a conquerour, & the Captain of our
salvation.

18. As He hath purchased, so hath He
appointed ordinances, for the laying of the founda-
tion, and carrying on of this work of sanctification:
both Word & Sacraments are appointed for this end:

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The Word to convert and to confirme. *John 17: 17. sanctifie them through thy truth, thy word is truth,* said Christ. The word is given as the rule; and also through the meanes thereof is life and strength conveyed to the soul, to perfect holinesse in the fear of God. *1. Pet. 2: 2.* And the Sacraments are given to strengthen & confirme the soul in the wayes of God.

19. As He hath laid downe strong encouragements to his followers, to hold on in the way of holinesse, many great & precious promises, by which they might be partakers of the divine nature. *2. Pet. 1: 4.* and by which they are encouraged to cleanse themselves from all filthinesse of the flesh & spirit *2. Cor. 7: 1.* and many motives to hold on & continue; So hath He rolled difficultyes out of the way, whether they be within us, or without us, and thereby made the way easie, and pleasant to such as walk in it; so as they may now run in the way of his commandements, & walk & not weary, & run & not be faint.

20. May we would remember, for our encouragement and confidence, that in carrying on of this work lyeth the satisfaction of soul, & the pleasure of the Lord, that must prosper in His hand, & that He seeth his seed, & hath of the travall of his soul, and is satisfied.

These particulars rightly considered will discover unto us, what a noble ground for sanctification is in Christ laid downe for believers, which they may, and must, by faith, gripe to, that they may grow in grace, and grow up in Christ, and perfect holinesse; and what a wonderful

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contrivance of grace this is, wherein all things are made so sure for beleevers; Christ becoming all things to them, and paving a royall & sure way for them; sure for them, and glorious to himself.

As to the *second* particular; that is, How beleevers are to carry in this matter, or how they are to make use of Christ, and of those grounds of sanctification, in Christ, which we have mentioned.

First, There are some things which they would beware of, and guard against: as,

1. They would beware of an *heartlesse despondency*, & giving way to discouragements, and hearkning to the language of unbelieve, or to the suggestions of Satan, whereby he will labour to perswade them of the impossibility of getting the work of sanctification throughed, or any progresse made therein to purpose. Satan & a deceitfull heart can soon muster up many difficultyes, & alledge that there are many Lyons, many insuperable difficultyes, in the way, to discourage them from venturing forward; and if Satan prevail here, he hath gained a great point. Therefore the beleever would keep up his head in hope, and beware of multiplying discouragements to himself, or of concluding the matter impossible; for then shall he neither have heart nor hand for the work, but sit downe & wring his hands, as overcome with discouragement, & despondency of Spirit.

2. They would beware of *wilfull rejecting their owne mercies*, and forbearing to make use of the grounds of hope of strength and progresse, in the matter of sanctification, which Christ hath allowed them to make use of. There is such an evil:

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even amongst Gods children, that they scarce use that which Christ out of great love hath provided for them, and dar not with confidence make use of nor apply to themselves, the great and comfortable promises, to the end they might be encouraged: they will not take their allowance, as thinking themselves unworthy; and that it should be presumption in them to challenge a right to such great things; and they think it commendable humility in them, to stand aback; and so wilfully refuse the advantages and helps, that make so much for their growth in grace.

3. They would beware of a *carelesse neglect* of the *meanes*, appointed for advancing in holiness: for though the meanes do not worke the effect, yet it is by the meanes, that God hath chosen to worke the work of sanctification: Here that is to be seen, that the hand of the diligent maketh rich; and the field of the slothfull is soon grown over with thorns and nettles; so that poverty cometh as one that travelleth, and want as an armed man. *Prov. 24: 30, 31, 34.* It is a sinfull tempting of God, to think to be sanctified another way, than God hath in his deep wisdom condescended upon.

4. Yet they would beware of laying too much weight on the *meanes* & *ordinances*, as if they could effectuate the businessse. Though the Lord hath thought good to work in and by the meanes; yet He himself must do the work. Meanes are but meanes, and not the principal cause; nor can they work, but as the principal agent is pleased to make use of them, and to work by them: when we leave to the meanes, and to instruments, we prejudice our
activity.

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selves; by disobliging God, and provoking Him to leave us, that we may wrestle with the ordinances alone, and finde no advantage. Therefore the soul would guard against this.

5. Albeit the meanes can do nothing unlesse He breath, yet we would beware not only of neglecting them (as we said afore) but also of a *slighting way of performing of them*, without that earnestnesse and diligence, that is required. *Cursed is he, who doth the work of the Lord negligently. Ier. 48: 10.* Here then is the speciall art of Christianity apparent, to be as diligent, earnest, and serious in the use of the means, as if they could effectuate the matter, we were seeking; and yet to be as much abstracted from them, in our hopes and expectation, and to be as much leaning on the Lord alone, and depending on Him for the blessing, as if we were using no meanes at all.

6. They would beware of *slighting and neglecting the motions of the Spirit*; for thereby they may lose the best opportunity. They should be alwayes on the wing, ready to imbrace the least motion; and they should stand alwayes ready, waiting for the breathings of his Spirit, and open at his call: least afterward, they be put to call and seek, and not attaine what they would be at, as we see in the Spouse Cant. 5: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. &c.

7. They would also guard against the *quenching of the Spirit* 1 Thes. 5: 19, or *grieving of the Spirit*. Ephes. 4: 30. by their unchristian & unfuteable carriage: for this will much marre their sanctification. It is by the Spirit that the work of sanctification is carryed on, in the soul: and when

86 How Christ is to be made use of, this Spirit is disturbed, and put from his work, how can the work go on? When the motions of this indwelling Spirit are extinguished, his work is marred, and retarded: and when He is grieved, he is hindered in his work. Therefore souls would guard against unbelief, despondency, unsateable unchristian carriage &c.

8. Especially they would beware of wasting sinns Psal. 51: 10. Sins against light and conscience; such as David calleth presumptuous sin. Psal. 19: 13. They would beware also of favouring any known corruption, or any thing of that kinde, that may hinder the work of sanctification.

Secondly. It were usefull and of great advantage, for such as would grow in grace, and advance in the way of holinesse, to be living in the constant conviction.

1. Of the necessity of holinesse, without which no man shall see God Heb. 12: 14. nothing entering in into the new Ierusalem, that defileth. Rev. 21: 27.

2. Of their owne inability to do any one thing aright; how they are not sufficient of themselves to think any thing, as of themselves 2 Cor. 3: 5. and that without Christ, they can do nothing Iohn. 15: 5.

3. Of the insufficiency of any humane helpe, or meanes, or way, which they may think good to choole, to mortifie aright one corruption; or to give strength for the right discharge of any one duty for our sufficiency is of God 2. Cor. 3: 5. and it is through the Spirit that we must mortifie the deeds of the body Rom. 8: 13.

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4. And of the treachery and deceitfulnesse of the heart, which is bent to follow bywayes, being not only deceitfull above all things; but also desperately wicked. Ier. 17: 9.

That by this meanes the soul may be jealous of it self, and despaire of doing any thing in its owne strength; and to be fortified against that maine evill, which is an enemy to all true sanctification, viz. confidence in the flesh.

Thirdly. The soul would keep its eye fixed on those things.

1. On Christ's alssufficiency to helpe, in all cases, that He is able to save to the uttermost. Heb. 7: v. 25.

2. On his compassionednesse to such as are out of the way; and readynesse to helpe poor sinners, with his grace and strength; and this will keep up the soul from fainting and dispaireing.

3. On the commands to holinesse, such as those cleanse your hands, and purify your hearts I am 4: 8. and be ye holy for I am holy. 1 Pet. 1: 15. 16. and the like. That the authority of God, and conscience to a command, may set the soul to work.

4. On the great recompense of reward, that is appointed for such as wrestle on, and endure to the end; and on all the great promises of great things to such, as are sanctified, whereof the Scriptures are full; that the soul may be encouraged to run thorow difficultyes, to ride out stormes, to endure hardnesse, as a good souldier; and to persevere in duty.

5. On the other hand, on the many sad threatenings and denunciations of wrath, against such as transgresse his lawes; and on all the sad things

that,

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that such as shake off the fear of God, and the study of holinesse, have to look for, of which the Scripture is full; that by this meanes, the soul may be kepted in awe, and spurred forward unto duty, and made the more willing to shake off Leazynesse.

6. On the *Rule, the word of God*; by which alone we must regulate all our actions; and this ought to be our meditation day and night, and all our study, as we see it was *David's*, and other holy men of God their dayly work. See *Psal. 1* and *119.*

Fourthly, In all this study of holinesse, and aiming at an higher measure of grace, the believer would lavell at a right end: and so would not designe holinesse for this end, that he might be justified thereby, or that he might thereby procure and purchase to himself heaven and God's favour for the weight of all that, must lie on Iesus Christ, who is our Righteousnesse; and our holinesse must not derhorne Him, nor rob Him of his glory, which He will not give to another: But would study holinesse, to the end, he might glorifie God, Father, Son, and holy Spirit; and please Him, who calleth to holinesse; and thereby be made meet to be partaker of the Inheritance of the saints in light *Col. 1: 10, 12.* and be made a meet bride for such a holy bridegroom, and a member to such an holy head; that hereby others might be edified *Mat. 5: 16. 1. Pet. 2: 12.* and *3: 1, 2.* that the soul may look like a temple of the holy ghost, and like a servant of Christ's, bought with a price *1. Cor. 6: 17, 18. 10, 20.* And have a clear evidence of his regeneration

nation and justification, and also that he may expresse his thankfulness to God, for all his favours and benefits.

Fifthly. The soul would by faith lay hold on, and grip fast to the ground of sanctification: that is to say. 1. To what Christ hath purchased for his people. 2. To what as a publike person He hath done for them: And so by faith,

1. Challenge a right to, and lay hold on the promise of grace, strength, victory, and throw-bearing, in their combating with corruption within, and Satan and a wicked world without.

2. Reckon themselves dead unto sin, through the death of Christ; and alive unto God through his resurrection, Rom. 6: 4: 11. and that the old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed vers. 6. and that they are now, not under the law; but under grace., vers. 14.

That by this meanes, they may be encouraged to continue fighting against a vanquished enemy, and not give over, notwithstanding of disappointments, discouragements, prevailings of corruption, &c. and the beleever may know upon what ground he standeth, and what is the ground of his hope and expectation of victory in end; and so he may run, not as uncertanely; and so fight; not as one that beatech the aire 1 Cor. 9: 26.

sixthly. In this work of sanctification, the beleever would be much in the lively exercise of faith; fight by faith; advance by faith; grow up, and bring forth fruit by faith; and so

The beleever would be oft renewing his gripe of Christ, holding Him fast by faith, and so abiding

cing

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ding in Him, that he may bring forth fruit John 15:4, 5.

2. Not only would he be keeping his union with Christ, but he would be also eyeing Christ by faith, as his store house, and generall Lord dispenser of all the purchased blessings of the Covenant, which he standeth in need of: and looking on Christ, as standing engaged by office, to compleate his work of salvation; and to present him with the self to himself holy, without blemish, yea and without spot or wrinkle or any such thing Ephes. 5:27.

3. He would by faith gripe to the promises, both of the generall stock of grace, the new heart & heart of flesh, and the Spirit to cause us walke in his statutes Ezech. 36: 26, 27. and of the severall particular acts of grace, that he standeth in need of, such as that Jer. 30: 8. *I will cleanse them from all their iniquities &c.* so Ezech. 36: 25. *I will cleanse them from all unrighteousness &c.* And so having, or gripping these promises, we are to cleanse our selves from all filthinesse of flesh & Spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God 2 Cor. 7: 1.

4. As the beleever would by faith draw out of Christ, through the conduite of the promises, which are *all yea & amen in Him*, 2 Cor. 1: 20. grace, strength, knowledge, courage, or whatever his fight in this warfare calleth for, to the end he may be *strong in the Lord and in the power of his might*, Ephes. 6: 10. So he would by faith hold the weight of the whole work upon Christ; and thus cast himself, and his care and burden on Him, who careth for him, 1 Pet. 5: 7. Psal. 37: 5.

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55: 22. and so go on in duty, without anxiety, knowing who beareth the weight of all, and who hath undertaken to work both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure: thus should the work be easie and saife, when by faith we roll the burden on Him, who is the chosen one, fitted for that work; and leave it on Him, who is our strength, patiently waiting for the outgate, in hope.

Thus the beleever makes use of Christ, as made of God *Sanctification*, when in the use of meaner appointed, eyeing the covenant of grace, and the promises thereof, and what Christ hath done to sanctifie and cleanse his people, he rolleth the matter on Him, and expecteth help, salvation & victory, through Him.

CAUTIONS.

But least some should be discouraged, and think all this in vaine, because they perceive no progresse, nor growth in grace, for all this, but rather corruption as strong and troublesome as ever, I would say a few things to them.

1. Let them search and try, whether their shortcoming and disappointment doth not much proceed from this, that the matter is not so cleanly cast over on Christ, as it should be: Is it not too oft found, that they goe forth to the battell in their own strength, lippening to their owne stock of grace, to their owne knowledge or to their duties, or the like? How then can they prosper?

2. Let them mourne, as they get any discovery of this; and guard hereafter against that corrupt byas of the heart, which is still inclining them to an engadgment, without the Captaine of their salva-

tion,

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tion, and a fighting without the armour of God.

3. Let them try and see, if in studying holiness, they be not led by corrupt ends: and do not more labour after sanctification, than they may be more worthy, and the better accepted of God, and that they may have quietnesse and peace as to their acceptance with God, as if this were any cause, matter or condition of their righteousness and justification before God; then that they may shew their obedience to the command of God 1 *Thes.* 4: 3. *Ephes.* 2: 10. *Ioh.* 15: 16. and expresse their thankfulness to Him, and glorifie God *Mat.* 11: 6. *Mat.* 5: 16. *Iohn.* 17: 10. *Ephes.* 4: 30. and if so, they ought to acknowledge Gods goodness in that disappointment, seeing thereby they see more and more a necessity of laying aside their own righteousness, and of betaking themselves to the righteousness of Christ, and of resting on that alone for peace and acceptance with God.

4. They would try and see, if their negligence and carelesnesse in watching, and in the discharge of duties, do not occasion their disappointments & shortcoming. God sometimes thinks fit to suffer a lion of corruption to set on them, that they may look about them, and stand more vigilantly upon their watch tower, knowing that they have to do with a vigilant adversary, the devil, who as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour 1 *Pet.* 5: 8. and that they fight not against flesh & blood; but against Principalities, against powers, against the Rulers of the darknesse of this world, against spirituall wickednesse in high places. *Ephes.* 6: 12. It is not for nought, that we are so often com-
manded.

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manded to watch *Mat. 24: 42. & 25: 13. & 26: 41. & 14: 38. Luk. 21: 36. Mark 13: 33, 34, 35, 37. 1 Cor. 16: 13. 1 Thes. 5: 6. 1 Pet. 4: 7. Col. 4: 2.* through the want of this, we know what befell *David* and *Peter*.

5. They would try and see, whether there be not too much self confidence, which occasioned *Peter's* soule fall: God may, in justice and mercy, suffer corruption to break loose upon such, at a time, and tread them underfoot, to learne them afterward to carry more soberly; and to *work out their salvation with fear & trembling Phil. 2: 12.* remembering what a Jealous holy God He is, with whom they have to do; what an adversary they have against them; and how weak their owne strength is,

6. This would be remembered, that one may be growing in grace, and advancing in holinesse, when to his apprehension, he is not going forward from strength to strength, but rather going backward. It is one thing to have grace, and another thing to see that we have grace: so it is one thing to be growing in grace, and nother thing to see that we are growing in grace. Many may question their growth in grace, when their very questioning of it may evince the contrary: for they may conclude no growth, but rather a backgoing, because they perceive more and more violent, and strong corruptions, and hidden works of darknesse and wickednesse, within their souls, than ever they did before; whereas that great discovery, sheweth the Increase of their spirituall knowledge; and an increase in this is an increase in grace. So they may
question

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question and doubt of their growth, upon mistakes, as thinking corruption alwayes strongest, when it makes the greatest stirre & noise; Or their complaints may flow from a vehement desire they have to have much more sanctification, which may cause them overlook many degrees they have advanced: or some such thing may occasion their darknesse and complaints; yea God may think it fittest for them, to the end they may be kept humble and diligent, to be in the dark as to their progresse; whereas if they saw, what advancement & progresse they had made in christianity, they might grow wanton, secure, and carelesse, and so occasion some sad disconsolation to humble them againe.

7. It would be remembered, that perfect victory is not be had here: it is true, in respect of justification, through the imputation of the perfect righteousness of Christ; and in respect of their sincerity and gospel simplicitie, and in respect also of the parts of the new man, beleevers are said to be perfect; Such an one was Noah Gen. 6: 9. and Job. Cap. 1: 1, 8. see also Psal. 37: 37. and 64: 4. 1 Cor. 2: 6. Heb. 5: 14. 1am. 3: 2. And it is true, we are to aime at perfection, and to pray for it, as Mat. 5: 48. 2. Cor. 13: 11. Col. 4: 12. Heb. 13: 21. 1am. 11: 4. 1 Pet. 5: 10. Heb. 6: 1. Yet as to the degrees of holinesse, & sanctification, and in respect of the remnant of corruption within, there is no full perfection here, Job. 9: 20, 21. Phil. 3: 12. for even he who is washen, and as to justification, is cleane every whit, yet needeth to wash his feet, because contracting filth, in his conversation Job. 13: 10. So that if the Lord should

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mark iniquity, no man should stand. Psal. 130: 3. & 143: 2. There will stil be in the best something, more or lesse, of that battell, that Paul speaketh of Rom. 7: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. So that they will stil have occasion to cry out with him vers. 24. O I wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And the flesh will still fight against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that they shall not be able to do what they would Gal. 5: 17. The place of perfection is above, where all tears are wiped away, and the weary weasiter is at rest.

8. Let them not mistake, and think, that every stirring of corruption in the soul, argueth its dominion and prevailing power. Corruption may stirre and make a great deal ado, where it cannot get leave to reigne; and bear a violent and cruell invader, seeking the throne, putting the whole kingdom in a combustion, who is resisted with force of armes. Corruption may be more quiet and still, when indeed it hath the throne of the soul: as a conquerour may be more quiet and still, when he hath overcome, and is in peaceable possession of the kingdom, than when he was but fighting for it: when the strong man keeps the house, and is Master, than all is quiet, and at rest, till a stronger come to thrust him out, and dispose of him.

9. Sanctification doth not alwayes consist in mans freedom from some corruptions: for there may be some corruptions, that one hath no naturall inclination to; but, on the contrary, a great aversion from: as some worlds wretches, may have

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no inclination to prodigality, and ranting, or such like vices, which are contrary to their humors, or to their constant education: and Satan may never tempt some man to such evils. knowing he will get more advantage, by plying his temper and genius, and so carrying him away to the other contrary evil; and so, though this man know not so much, as what it is once to be tempted to these vices, yet that will not say, that he is a sanctified man; farr lesse will it say, that he hath more grace than another man, whose predominant that evil is, and against which he is dayly fighting and wrestling. Whence it appeareth, that wrestling, and protesting against even an overcoming corruption, may evidence more of grace, than freedom from some evils, to which some are not so much tempted, and to which they are naturally lesse inclined.

10. Nor should they think, that corruption is alwayes master of the soul, and possessing the throne as a full conquerour, when it prevailleth and carryeth the soul head-long, at a time: for corruption may sometimes come in upon the soul as an inundation, with irresistible violence, and, for a time, carry all before it; so that the soul cannot make any sensible resistance; as when a sudden, violent and unexpected temptation setteth on, so as the poor Man is overwelmed, & scarce knoweth where he is, or what he is doing, till he be laid on his back: at that time, it will be a great matter, if the soul dar quietly enter a protest against, and dissent from what is done: and if there be an honest protestation against the violent & tyrannicall invasion of corruption, we cannot say, that corruption is in pre-

able possession of the throne: if the Spirit be lasting against the flesh, leaving all the forces he can, against the invader, by prayer and supplication to God, and calling-in all the supply of divine help he can get, and when he can do no more, is sighing and groaning under that unjust invasion, resolving never to pay homage to the usurper, nor to obey his lawes, nor so much as parley with him, or make peace, we can not say, that the soul doth consent fully unto this usurpation: Nay, if the soul shall do this much, at such a time, when Satan sets on with all his force, it will be a greater evidence of the strength of grace in the soul, than if the soul should do the same or a little more, at a time, when the temptation is not so strong.

11. It is not good for them to say, that grace is not growing in them, because they advance not so far, as some do; and because they come not to the pitch of grace, that they see some advanced too. That is not a sure rule to measure their growth in grace by. Some may have a better naturall temper, whereby they are lesse inclined to severall vices, which these finde a strong propension to; they may have the advantage of a better education, and the like. So that they should rather try themselves this year, by what they were the last year, and that in reference to the lusts, to which they have been most subject, all their dayes.

12. We must not think that every beleever will attaine to the same measure of grace; there is a measure appointed for every member, or joynt of this body; and every joynt supplieth, according to the effectuall working in the measure of every part.

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Ephes. 4: 16. God hath more a doe with some than with others; there is more strength required in an arme or legg, than in a finger or toe. And every one should be content with his measure, so far as not to fret or repine against God, and his dispensations, that makes them but a finger, and not an arme of the body; and do their duty in their station, fighting against sin, according to the measure of grace dispensed to them of the Lord, and God faithfully & constantly; and not quarrell with God, that He maketh us not as free of temptations and corruptions, as some others: for the Captaine must not be blamed for commanding some of his souldiers to this post, where they never once see the enemy; and others to that post, where they must continually fight: the souldier is here under command, and therefore must be quiet, and take his lot; so must the Christian reverence the Lords dispensations; in ordering matters, so as they shall once have one houres quiernesse, whileas others have more rest and peace; and stand at their post fighting, resolving never to yeeld, but rather to cover the ground with their dead bodyes, till the Commander in chief think good to relieve them. Now I am, as the only wife God hath distributed to every member of the body, as He hath thought good; it is the duty of every member, to endeavour in holy submission to Him, as to the measure of grace considered as His free gift, bestowed on them; and to be humbled for the grudgings of his heart, because God hath not given him more talents: and sure I am, though this submission make no gaine in this world; yet really this is one of the highest

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highest degrees of grace attainable here, and last
an outward of a meek and quiet Spirit, as in the
sight of God of great price; so that whoever hath
submitted to this, have the very grace they seem to
want, and more. Yet lest this should be abused,
in a headstrong word or two of censure, to qualify
the submission: 1. There must be with it an high
praising even of that degree of grace, which they
want. 2. There must be a panting after grace, as it
is God's image, and a conformity to Him: and
that with so much singleness, as they may be in
case to say, without the reproachings of their heart,
they do not so much love holiness for heaven, as
heaven for holiness. 3. There must be an incess-
stantness in using all means, whereby the growth
of grace may be promoted, to this end, that they
may be conformed to His image, rather than that
they may be comforted. 4. There must be also
a deep humiliation for the want of that degree of
grace they would have, as it importeth the want
of so much conformity to Him, to whose image
they are predestinated to be conformed, which will
very well consist with this submission, we are speak-
ing of.

13. It would be remembered, that there may
be a great progress, even when it is not observed,
when, 1. Hereby the man is made to ly in the dust,
to loath himself, and cry, behold I am vile. 2. Here-
by his indignation against the body of death is the
more increased. 3. Hereby his esteem of a saviours
and of the blessed contrivance of salvation is the
more heightened, that he seem he is thereby brought
to make mention of His righteousness, even of
His only. 4. Hereby his longing after immortality

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fruition is increased, where all these complaints shall cease. 5. And hereby he is put to that much slighted duty of holding fast the remembrance of his hope firme unto the end, looking and longing for the grace, that shall be brought unto him, at the revelation of Iesus Christ, when he shall be presented without spot, and made meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

CHAP. VI.

How Christ is to be made use of, in reference to the killing and crucifying of the old man.

HAVING thus shortly pointed out something in generall, serving to the clearing and opening up the way of our usemaking of Christ for sanctification, we come now more particularly to the clearing up of this busines. In sanctification we must consider *First* the renewing and changing of our nature and frame; and *next* the washing and purging away of our daily contracted spots. The first of these is commonly divided into two parts, viz. 1. *The mortification*, killing and crucifying of the old man of sin and corruption, which is within; and 2. *The vivification* renewing, quickning and strengthening of the new man of grace, and this is a growth in grace, and in fruitfulness in holiness.

As to the first of these viz the mortification or crucifying of the old man, we would know, that there is such a principle of wickednesse and enmity against God, in man by nature now, since the fall,

for Mortification.

whereby the man is inclined to evil; and only to evil. This is called *the old man*, as being like the body, made up of so many parts, joynts and members, that is, so many lusts & corruptions and evil inclinations, which together make up a *corpus*, and they are fast joyned and compacted together, as the members of the body, each usefull and serviceable to another, and all of them concurring and contributing their utmost to the carrying on of the work of sin; and so it is the man of sin and it is also called *the old man*, as having first possession of the soul, before it is by grace renewed; and is dying more and more daily. Thus it is called *the old man*, and the body of sin Rom. 6: 6. This *old man* hath his members in our members & faculties, so that none of them are free, understanding, will, affections, and the members of our body are all servants of unrighteousness to this body of sin, and old man. So we read of the motions of sin Rom 7: 5. *which work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death*; and of the lusts of the flesh Rom. 13: 14. Gal. 5: 16, 24. and the lusts of sin Rom. 6: 12. So we hear of the desires of the flesh, and of the minds Ephes. 2: 3. and of affections and lusts Gal. 5: 24. And the old man is said to be corrupt, according to the deceitfull lusts. Ephes. 4: 22. all which lusts and affections are as many members of this body of sin, and of this old man. And further, there is therein considerable a power, force and efficacy, which this old man hath, as we, to carry us away, and, as it were, command us, to constrain us, as by a forcible law. Hence we read of the law of sin and death Rom. 8: 2, which only

the law of the spirit of life in Christ doth make us free from. It is also called a law in our members warring against the law of our minde Rom. 7: 23. and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin, which is in our members. So it is said to lust against the Spirit and to warre. Gal. 5: 17 All which putt out the strength, activity and dominion of sin in the soul; so that it is as the husband over the wife Rom. 7: 1. yet it hath a domineering and constraining power, where its horns are not held in by grace. And as its power is great, so its nature is wicked & malicious, for it is pure enmity against God Rom. 8: 7. so that it neither is, nor can be reconciled; and therefore must be put off, and abolished Eph. 2: 15. killed & crucified Rom. 6: 6. Now herewith the work of a beleever, to be killing, mortifying and crucifying this enemy, or rather enemy, and delivering himself from under this bondage and slavery, that he may be Christ's free man, and that through the Spirit. Rom. 8: 13.

Now if it be asked, how shall a beleever make use of Christ, to the end this old man may be gotten crucified; or how should a beleever mortifie the Old man, and the lusts thereof, through Christ, or by the Spirit of Jesus? We shall propose those things which may helpe to cleare this.

1. The beleever would have his eye on this old man, as his arch enemy, as a deadly enemy, lying within his bosome. It is an enemy ludging within him, in his Soul, Minde, Heart and Affections; so that, there is no part free; and therefore is acquant with all the motions of the soul, and is alwayes opposing, and hindering every thing that

is good, It is an enemy that will never be reconciled to God, and therefore will not be reconciled with the believer, as such; for it is called *enmity* itself: and so it is actively alwayes seeking to promote the ruine of the soul, what by prompting, inclining, moving and forceably drawing or driving, (sometimes with violence and rage) to evil; what by withstanding, resisting, opposing, counter working, and contradicting what is good; so that the believer can not get that done, which he would do; and is made to do that, which he would not. Therefore this being such an enemy, and so dangerous an enemy, so constant and implacable an enemy, so active and close an enemy, so deadly and destructive; it is the believers part, to guard against this enemy, to have a vigilant eye upon it, to carry as an irreconcilable enemy thenceunto; and therefore never to come in seasons of supplication, or agreement, therewith, never once to parlie, let be, make peace. And the believer would not have his vigilant eye upon this or that Member of this body of death, so much as upon the Body itself, or the Principle of wickedness and rebellion against God; the Head, Life, Spirit or Law of this body of death: for therein is its greatest wickedness, and activity: and this is alwayes opposing us though not in every joynt and member; but sometime in one, sometime in another.

2. Though the believer should have a main eye upon the Body, this innate, strong and forcible law of sin and death; yet should he have friendship and familiarity with no part, member or lust of

all this body: all the deeds of the body should be mortified, Rom. 8: 13. the old man with his deeds should be mortified Col. 3: 6. & we should mortifie our members, which are upon the earth, vers. 5. for all of them are against us, & the least of them countenanced, entertained & imbraced, will worke our ruine, & cut our souls throate; therefore should the beleever look on each of them, & on all of them, as his deadly enemies.

3. He would consider, that as it is a very unseemly thing for him, to be a slave to that old tyrant, and to yeeld his members, as so many servants to iniquity; so it is dangerous & deadly: his life lyeth at the stake: either he must get it mortified, killed & subdued, or it will kill him: his life will goe for its life: if this enemy escape, he is a gone man. The consideration of this would cause the beleever act here in earnestnesse and seriousnessse, with care and diligence; and set about this work of mortification, with labour and paines.

4. Much more must it be against all reason and christianity, for the beleever to be making provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof, Rom. 13: 14. To be strengthening the hands of, and laying provision to this enemy, which is let & sworn against us, can stand with no reason. And here is much of the christians prudence & spirituall wisdom required, to discerne, what may make for fostering of this or that corruption, or member of the body of sin & death, and to withdraw that, as we will labour to take away provision of any kinde, from an enemy, that is coming against us: Paul acted hertin, as a wise gamster, & combatant,

rant, when he keeps under his body, & brought it into subjection 1 Cor. 9: 27. It were but to mock God, & to preach forth our own folly; to be looking to Christ for help against such an enemy, and in the mean time, to be under-hand strengthening the hands of the enemy: this would be double dealing and treachery against our selves.

5. To the end, their opposition unto this enemy may be the stronger and more resolute, they would consider, that this body of sin is wholly set against God, & his interest in the soul, being very enmity it self against God Rom. 8: 7. and alwayes lasting and fighting against the work of God in the soul Gal. 5: 17. & against every thing that is good, so that it will not suffer (so far as it can hinder) the soul to do any thing that is good, at least in a right manner, and for a right end: nay, with its lustings it driveth constantly to that which is evill, raiseth evil motions & inclinations in the soul, ere the beleever be aware: sidech with any temptation that is offered, to the end it may destroy the soul, like a traitour within; as we see it did in David, when he fell in adultery; and with Asaph Ps. 73: 2. yea it self opposeth and tempteth Iam. 1: 14. by setting minde, will & affections, on wrong courses: and thus it driveth the soul to a course of rebellion against God, or diverts it and drawes it back, that it cannot get God served aright; yea sometimes it sets a fire in the soul, intangling all the faculties, filling the minde with darknesse or prejudice, misleading or perverting the affections, and so miscarrying the will, & leading it captive Rom. 7: 23.

so that the thing is done, which the regenerate soul would not do, and the duty is left undone which the soul would fain have had done: yea, and that sometimes notwithstanding of the souls watching, and striving against this; so strong is its force.

6. The beleever would remember that this enemy is not for him to fight against alone, and that his owne strength and skill will make but a slender opposition unto it: It wil laugh at the shaking of his spear: it can easily insinuate it self, on all occasions, because it lyeth so neare & close to the soul, alwayes residing there, and is at the beleevers right hand, whatever he be doing, and is alwayes openly or closely, opposing, and that with great facility: for it easily beleeueth *Heb. 12: 1.* because it lyeth within the soul, & in all the faculties of it, in the Heart, Minde, Will, Conscience & Affectiones; so that upon this account, the deceitfulness of the heart is great, & passeth the search of Man *Ier. 17: 9.* Man cannot know all the windings and turnings, all the drifts and designes, all the lurking and retiring places, all the falsehoods and double dealings, all the dissimulations, lies and subterfages, all the plausible and deceitfull pretences and insinuations of this heart, acted and spirited by this law of sin and death. And beside this slight and cunning, it hath strength and power to draw, by lusts, into destruction and perdition *1 Tim. 4: 9.* and to carry the soul headlong. So that it makes the mans case miserable *Rom. 7: 24.* All which would say, that the beleever should call in other help than his owne, and remember, that *through the Spirit* he must mortifie the deeds of the body. *Rom. 8: 13.*

7. And

7. And therefore the beleever must lay aside all his carnall weapons, in dealing with this adversary; and look out for divine help & assistance, even for the promised Spirit, through which alone he can be instructed & inabled for this great work; for of himself he can do nothing, nor so much as think a good thought as of himself 2. Cor. 3: 5. far lesse will he be able to oppose such a mighty adversary, that hath so great & many advantages, and therefore all his carnall meanes, purposes, vowes, & fightings in himself, will but render himself weaker, & a readyer prey unto this adversary, which gaineth ground while he is so opposed. It is Christ alone and his Spirit, that can destroy the works of the devil, and kill or crucify this enmity.

8. So that the beleever must have his recourse, for help and succour here, unto Iesus the Captaine of salvation; and must follow Him, and fight under his banner, make use of his weapons, which are spirituall; fight according to his counsell and conduct, taking Him as a leader & commander, & lying open for his orders & instructions: waiting for the motions of his Spirit, & following them; and thus oppose & fight against this deadly enemy, with an eye alwayes on Christ by faith, depending on Him, for light to the minde, resolution to the will, and grace to the whole soul, to stand in the battle; and so withstand all assaults, and never engage in a dispute with this enemy, or any lust or member of this body, without Christ the Principall; that is, the soul would dispaire in it self, and be strong in Him, and in the power of his might, by faith gripping to Him, as Head, Captaine and

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Commander in chiefe, resolving to fight in his strength, and to oppose, through the helpe of his Spirit.

9. And for this cause, the beleever would eye the covenant of Redemption, the *basis* of all our hope and consolation, wherein finall and full victory is promised to Christ, as head of the elect, viz, that He shall *bruiſe the ſerpents head*; and ſo that in Him, all his followers, and members of his myſticall body, ſhall liſe up the head, and get full victory at length over both ſin and death. Now it is God, *th it giveth us the victory, through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 15: 57. The beleever would alſo eye by faith the covenant of Grace, wherein particularly this ſame victory is promiſed to the beleever, in and through Jeſus, Rom. 16: 20. *& the God of peace ſhall bruiſe Satan under your feet ſhortly*; and, *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for yee are not under the law but under grace* Rom. 6: 14. The beleever, I ſay, would look out by faith unto, and lay hold on, theſe and the like promiſes; and thereby get ſtrength conveyed to himſelf, whereby he may ſtrive lawfully, and fight valiently, and oppoſe with courage and reſolution.

10. Further, the beleever would eye Chriſt as a fountaine of Furniture, as a full and compleat magazine, ſtanding open, & ready for every one of his honeſt ſouldiers, to run to, for new ſupply of what they want: ſo that whatever they finde wanting in their Chriſtian armour, they muſt run away to the open magazine, Chriſts fulneſſe, that ſtandeth ready for them; and by faith take & put on what they want & ſtand in need of, in their warfare.

warfare. If their *girdle of truth* be slacke, loosed or weakened, and they be meeting with temptations anent their hypocrisie, and Satan objecting to them their double dealing, of purpose to discourage them, and to make them faine & give over the fight; they must away to Him, who is *the Truth*. that He may binde on that girdle better, and make their hearts more upright before God, in all they do. And if their *breast plate of righteousness* be weakened, & Satan there seem to get advantage, by casting up to them their unrighteous dealings towards God or Men, they must flee to Him, who only can help here, and beg pardon through his blood, for their failings, and set to againe a fresh to the battel. If their resolution, which is understood by the *preparation of the gospel of peace*, grow weak, it must be renewed in Christs armory, and the feet of new be shod therewith. If their *shield of faith* beginne to fail them, away must they get to Him, who is the *Author & finisher of faith* Heb 12: 2. And if their *helmet of hope* beginne to fail them, In this armory alone can that be supplied. And if their *sword* be blunted in their hand, or they unable to wield it aright, the Spirit of Jesus can only teach their hands to fight, and instruct them how to mannage that usefull weapon with advantage. Thus must the beleever be strong in Him, and in the power of his might Ephes. 6: 10. He is their God that girdeth them with strength and maketh their way perfect. He maketh their feet like hinds feet, & setteth them upon their high places. He teacheth their hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by their armes. He giveth them the shield of Salvation. His
right

right hand upholdeth them. He girdeth with strength unto the battell, *Eccl. Psal. 18: vers. 32, 33, 34, 35, 39. &c.*

11. For the further strengthening of their Hope, Faith & Confidence, beleevers would eye Christ, as hanging on the crosse, and overcoming by death, Death and him that had the power of death, the Devill, & so as meritoriously purchasing this redemption from the slavery of sin and Satan; and particulary, from the slavery of that body of death, and of the law of sin & death: for the Apostle tells us *Rom. 8: 2.* that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, doth make us free from the law of sin and death, and that because, as he saith further *vers. 3, 4.* what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his owne son in the likenesse of sinfull flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. So that the beleever may now look upon that enemy, how fearfull so ever it appear, as condemned and killed, in the death of Christ. He, having laid downe the price of Redemption, hath bought this freedom from the chains & fetters, with which he was held in captivity: faith then on the death of Jesus, satisfiing justice, for the poor captive, may & should support, and strengthen the hope & confidence of the beleever, that he shall obtaine victory at length.

12. And it will further confirme the hope and faith of the beleever, to look to Christ hanging on the crosse, and there vanquishing and overcoming this arch-enemie, as a publick person, representing the

the elect, who died in him, and virtually and legally did, in him, overcome that Iailour, and break his fetters: and the soul now beleevng, may, yea should, reckon it self, in Christ, dying, as it were, upon the crosse; and there overcoming all those spirituall enemies: likewise, sayeth the Apostle Rom. 8: 11. *Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.* From hence, even while fighting, the beleever may account himself a conquerour, yea more then a conquerour, through Him that loved him, Rom. 8: 37. Now faith acting thus on Christ, as a publick person, dying and overcoming death and sin, the beleever may not only inserte the certainty of victory, knowing that our old man is crucified with Christ Rom 8: 6. but also from the crosse of Christ draw strength to stand, & fight against the strugglings of this vanquished and killed enemy. *They that are Christs have crucified the flesh with the affections & lusts, Gal. 5: 24.* But how? even by the crosse of Christ, for thereby is the world crucified unto me (sayeth the Apostle Gal. 6: 14.) & I unto the world: your old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, Rom. 6: 6.

13. The beleever, being dead indeed unto sin, through the crosse of Christ, is to look upon himself as legally freed from that yock of bondage under sin & death. *The law hath dominion over a man, so long as he liveth Rom. 7: 1.* But by the body of Christ, beleivers are become dead to the law, vers. 4. That law of sin & death, which hath dominion over a man, that liveth still in nature, and is not yet by faith planted in the likeness of Christs death, nor
buried

buried with him by baptisme into death Rom. 6: 4, 5. hath not that dominion over beleivers, it had once: for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Iesus hath made them free from the law of sin & death Rom. 8: 2. So that now the beleever is free from that tyranny; and that tyrant can exerce no lawfull jurisdiction or authority over him, and therefore he may with the greater courage repell the insolencies of that tyrant, that, contrare to all right and equity, seeketh to Lord it over him still. They are no lawfull Subjects to that cruell and raging Prince, or to that spirituall wickednesse,

14. So that the beleever renouncing that jurisdiction, under which he was formerly, and being under a new husband, and under a new law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Iesus, is to look upon all the motions of sin as illegall, and as treasonable acts of a tyrant. The old man being crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, the beleever is not any more to serve sin Rom. 6: 6. And being now dead they are freed from sin vers. 7. and are married to another, even to Him, who is raised from the dead, & so they should not serve sin, but bring forth fruit unto God Rom. 7: 4. & therefore look upon all motions of the flesh, and all the inclinations and stirrings of the old law of sin, as acts of treachery and rebellion against the right and jurisdiction of the beleivers new Lord & Husband; and are therefore obliged to lay hold on this old man, this body of death, and all the members of it, as traitours to the rightfull King & Husband, and to take them prisoners to the King, that He may give our sentence, and execute the same, against them,

them, as enemies to his kingdome and interest in the soul: They being now no more servants of sin, but of righteousness Rom. 6: 18. they ought no more to yeeld their members servants to uncleannesse & iniquity, unto iniquity vers. 19. and being debtors, no more to the flesh, to live after the flesh Rom. 8: 12. they are to mortifie the deeds of the body through the Spirit vers. 13. and to crucify the flesh with the affections & lusts Gal. 5: 24. that is, by bringing them to the crosse of Christ, where first they were condemned and crucified, in their full body and power; that a new sentence, as it were, may goe out against them, as parts of that condemned Tyrant, and as belonging to that crucified body.

15. So that the beleever, that would carry faithfully in this matter, and fight lawfully in this warfare, and hope to obtaine the victory, through Jesus Christ, must bring these Traitors, that appeare in their sinfull motions, and lusts in the soul, working rebellion against the Just authority, and equirable lawes of the lawfull Prince, Iesus, before the tribunal of Him, who hath now got all power and authority, in heaven and earth. Mat. 28: 18. and hath all judgment committed to Him. Ioh. 5: 22. And to this end, both died and rose, & revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living Rom. 14: 9. that He may execute justice upon the Traitor, head and members, that He may trample these devils under, and bruisse the head of these serpents within us. The beleever then is, by faith in prayer, to carry these open enemies to Christ, and declare and witness against them

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them as Traitors, by what mischief they have done in the soul, by their hindering the righteous lawes of the king to be obeyed; and constraining & forcing, what by arguments or allurements, and what by forceable inclinations and pousings, to disobedience and a counteracting of Christ; and he should urge and plead, upon the fundamentall lawes of the land, viz the articles of agreement betwixt the Father and the Son; and the faithfull promiser of the Covenant of grace; and upon Christs office as King, and Governour, and his undertaking as Mediator; upon the merites of his death and sufferings; upon his dying as a common person; upon the constitution of the gospell, whereby they are in law repute as dying in him, and so free from the law of sin and death; and upon their relation to Him as their new Lord, Head, Husband, King, Commander &c. Upon these arguments (I say) to plead for justice against the rebell, that is now brought to the barre, and so by faith leave the prisoner in His hand, that He may, in his own time, and way, give a second blow unto the neck of this implacable and raging enemy, that he may no: rise up to disturbe the peace of the soul, as before; or to trouble, impede, and molest the soul in paying the homage and obedience due to his lawfull Master and Sovereigne King Jesus.

Cautions & Directions.

For further clearing of the premises, I would propose a few particulars, for caution & direction: as,

1. This

1. This work of laying the burthen of this businesse on Christ by faith, would be gone about, with much singlenesse of heart, aiming at the glory of God, and the carrying on of his work in the soule: and not for self ends, and carnal by-respects, lest thereby we marre all.

2. It would be carryed on, without partiality, against all and every one of the lusts, and motions of the Old man: for if there be a complaisance with and a sparing of any one known lust, the whole work may be marred: they may meet with a disappointment, as to the particular lust, they are desiring victory over: and the lust they are harbouring, though it may seem little, may open a door to many stronger; and so occasion sad dayes to the man, ere he be aware.

3. As they would bring the particular lust, or lusts, unto Christ, as chiefe Lord justice; so they would alwayes lay the axe to the root of the tree, and crave justice against the maine body, that yet lieth within the soule; and these particular corruptions and affections, that are as members of that body of sin, should put them in minde of the old man; for they should crucifie *the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof Gal. 5: 24.* the body and the members: these lusts are the lusts of sin, or of that Head-sin, which hath a law, or the force and impulse of a law, in the soule: and therefore, their maine designe would be against this root, where lyeth the strength and body of the enemy, and which acteth in those members; this is the capitall enmity, and should be mainly opposed: and the following of this course, would prove more

successfull, than that which many a time we take: our sibling at or wrestling against this or that member of the body of death, is but of little advantage, so long as the maine body of sin, the bitter root of wickednesse, the carnall minde, this innate enmity, is miscent, and not opposed: but on the contrary strick at this, we strick at all.

4. This would be the belcevers constant work, to be *crucifying the flesh, with the lusts thereof*; to be *mortifying their members*; wherein the members of the old man quarter and lodge, Colos. 3: 5. to be *spiritually minded*; and to *minde the things of the spirit* Rom 8: 5, 6. for this carnall minde is *enmity against God* Rom. 8: 7. and so is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It is not only an enemy, which may be reconciled; but enmity, in the abstract, which never can be reconciled: and this enmity will never be idle, for it cannot, till it be fully and finally destroyed: the flesh is *alwayes lusting against the Spirit* Gal. 5. 17. for they are contrary one to the other. So that though, to our sense, it may sometimes appear as sleeping, in regard that it doth not by some particular lust so molest and perplex the soul, as formerly it did; yet it is restless, and may be more active in another lust; and so by changing weapons upon us deceive us. Here then is much spirituall wisdom and vigilancy required; when they think they have gotten one lust subdued, they must not think the war is at an end; but after all their particular victories, watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation.

5. This way of laying the weight of the matter

matter on Christ, should and will keep them humble, and teach them not to ascribe the glory of any good that is done unto themselves, but to give Him all the glory, who is jealous of his glory, and will not give it to another, that the crowne may alone flourish on his head, who is the Captaine of their salvation, and who by his Spirit worketh all their workes in them.

6. Nor would this way of carrying the matter to Christ, and putting it over on Him, cause the beleever become negligent in commanded duties, readings, hearing, prayer &c. for it is there he must expect to meet with Christ, there must he seek Him, and there must he waite for Him, and his Spirit, to do the work desired: for though He hath not limited himself to these meanes, so as He cannot, or will not, any other way helpe; yet He hath bound us to them; and it is our duty to waite there, where He hath commanded us to waite, though He should sometime think good to come another way, for the manifestation of the sovereignty of his grace.

7. Yet while we are about the meanes, we would guard against a leaning to them, lest in stead of getting victory over corruption, we be brought more in bondage thereunto; another way we must not think, that our Prayers, or our Hearing or Reading &c. will bring downe the body of death, or subdue any one corruption: for that were but an yeelding to corruption, and opening a back door to the carnal minde, and to another deadly lust, and a beating corruption with a sword of straw: This is not to mortifie the deeds of the body through

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through the Spirit, but through the flesh; and a
fleshly weapon will never draw blood of this spiri-
tually wickednesse, or old man; or of any corrupt
lust or affection thereof: and yet how many times
doth our deceitfull heart byas us this way? Our
work would be, as it saide to use the ordinances,
and means whereby we may get the businesse laid
on Christ, and help from Christ to do the businesse.
We must go to the meane with our prisoner, to
finde Christ there at his court, and assise; that He
may take course with the *Traitor*.

8. In all this there would be a looking to, and
dependance on Christ for helpe and grace: because
of our selves, as of our selves, we can not do this
much; we cannot complean aught of corruptions,
nor take them away to Christ; nor ask for justice
against them: as constables, and other officers
must carry malefactores to the courts of justice,
upon publick charges; so Christ will not have us
doing or attempting this much, on our own
charges: for He giveth noble allowance.

9. In following of this course, we would not
think alwayes to come speed at the first. Some-
times the Lord, for the encouraging of his
children, may give them a speedy hearing, and de-
liver them from the tyranny of some particular
lust or other, that hath troubled them; that for
some time, at least, it shall not so trouble them,
as it did. Yet He will not do so alwayes; but may
think it good, to keep them waiting on Him, and
hanging on his courts, for some considerable time;
that He may thereby increase their Faith, Patience,
Duties, Zeale, and Diligence. So shal it should

not seem strange to us, if we be not admitted at the first, and get not our answer, at the first try.

10. When the Lord thinketh good to delay the answer to our desires, and the execution of justice on the Malefactor & Traitor, or to deliver us from his tyranny and trouble, we would beware of thinking to capitulate with the enemy for our peace and quiet, or to enter into a collation of arms with him; that is, our enmity against him should never abate, nor should our desire after the mortification and crucifixion of this lust grow lesse; nor should we be quiet and at peace, though it should seem to grow a little more calme and still, or not to rage as formerly, for this looks but like a covenant or confederation, which will not stand.

11. We would also know, that what Christ said of devils, holdeth good of these lusts, viz. That some of them do not goe out, but by fasting and prayer; that is, by Christ fought unto and found in these meanes. There are some lusts, that will not be got so easily killed and mortified, as others; but will cost us more paines and labour, as being corruptions, which possibly have some greater advantage of our naturall temper, and constitution of body, or of long continuance and searced habit, or the like. We must not then think it strange, if some such lust be not subdued so easily as some others, to which we have fewer, and weaker, and not so frequent temptations.

12. As we cannot expect a full conquest of the body

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body of death, so long as we are here, as was shown above; so nor can we expect a full and small victory over any one lust, which ever we have been troubled with. It is true, Belcevers may be kepted from some grosse outbreacking of a corruption, which sometime prevailed, as *Peter* was from relapsing into an open and down-right denying his Master; yet that same corruption did afterward stirre, though not so violently as to carry him to such an hieght of sin; yet so farr as to cause him do that, which was a partiall denying of his Master, when *Paul* withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed, for withdrawing from the Gentils, for fear of them of the circumcision &c. *Gal. 2: 11, 12.* So, though a particular ~~corruption~~ may be so far subdued through grace, as that ~~it~~ ^{it} considerable time, a man may not finde it so violent, as it was; yet he cannot say, that it is totally killed, because it may stirre thereafter in some weaker measure; yea he cannot tell, but ere he come to die, that same corruption may rise to be as violent as ever, and that Satan may againe think to enter the soul, at that same breach, which once he entered at; yea, and who can tell, whether God may not suffer that corruption, which lay long as dead, to revive againe, for a time, and for a time drive the soul as violently as ever, and prevaile for a time? And this should teach all to walk soberly, watchfully, and in feare, and to have a vigilant eye, even upon such lusts and carnall affections, as they may suppose, they have gotte the victory of.

13. We would not think, that we gaine no ground upon corruption, because we still perceive it stirring, lesse or more; for as corruption is not alwayes strongest, (as was said above) nor hath the deepest footing in the soul, when its motions and stirrings are most felt; so nor must we think that there is no ground gained upon a lust, because we are still troubled and molested with its stirrings; for it is a great advantage to be more sensible of the motions of this enemy; and our more faithfull, and active wrestling against it, may make its least stirrings more sensible to us; as the motions and trouble, which a malefactor, while in grips & in prison, maketh, may be thought more of, than his greater rageings, before he was apprehended; yet he may be sure in fetters for all that, a beast that hath gotten death blow may get out of grips and run more mad then ever, and yet will die at length of the same blow.

14. Though we should not finde present ease and quiet, by our following this way; yet we should think it much, if the Lord helpe us to stand, when we have done all we can, though we meet not with the hoped-for successe presently: If he give us grace to continue, without wearying or fainting, and to be resolute never to give over, we have reason to blesse Him: if we be kept still in the conflict with pursuite of the enemy, it is our great advantage; the victory shall come, in Gods owne time. If our opposition so continue, that we are resolved never to take, nor give quarter, though our trouble and exercise should be the greater, and our ease and quiet the lesse, we

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ought to blesse Him, yea and rejoyce in hope of what He shall yet do for us. For *He that will come shall come, and will not tary.* Let us waite for Him, in doing our duty, and faithfully keeping our post.

15. Yea, if we get quietnesse or ease from the violence of raging lusts, for any little time; and be not continually driven and carryed head-long therewith, we ought to be thankful for this, and to walk humbly before Him; lest He be provoked, through our unthankfulnesse and pride, to let these furious dogs loose upon us againe.

16. When we are bending our strength and all our forces against some one corruption or other, which possibly hath been most troublesome to us, we would not be secure as to all others; or think that we are in hazard only on this side: for Satan may make a faint here; and really intend an assault at another place, by some other corrupt affection. O What need have we of spirituall wisdom, that we may be better acquainted with his stratagems and wiles? Let us for then fight against one member of this body of death, as to have our eye upon others, lest when we think to keep out Satan at the fore door, he enter in at the back door. He can make use of extremities, and play his game with both; yea, and gaine his poynt, if we be not aware.

Objections answered.

It will not be amisse, for further explaining of the matter, to remove a scruple or two, Some may say. That they cannot perceive, that all their

their paines in this matter come to any good issue; for they never found corruption stir more, & act more lively and incessantly, than since they began to fight against it in earnest. So that this would seem not to be the right way.

I answer: Though, from what is said before, particularly cautions 9th and 13th a resolution of this doubt may be had; yet I shall propose those things, for further clearing of the matter.

1. May not much of this flow from thy not laying the whole work so wholly off thy self, and upon Christ, as thou oughtest to do? Try, and see.

2. May not the devil rage most, when he thinks ere long to be ejected? May he not labour to create most trouble to the soul, when he feels that he is like to be put from some of his strengths?

3. May not the devil be doing this of purpose, to drive thee to dispaire, of ever getting corruption subdued and mortified; or to a fainting and sitting up in the pursue; and to a dependency of spirit, that so in stead of fighting or standing, thou may cede and turne the back; and should we comply with him in his designs?

4. May not the Lord give way to this for a time, to try thy Serionnesse, Patience, Submission, and Faith, and to sharpen thy diligence, and kindle up thy Zeal? And should we not submit to his wise dispensations?

5. How can thou say, that thou gainest no advantage, as long as thou art not made to lay aside the matter wholly, as hopelesse of any good issue;

but on the contrary, art helped to stand, and to resist sin, to cry out against it, to fight as thou canst, and at least not to yeeld?

6. What if God see it for thy advantage, that thou be kept so in exercise for a time, to the end thou may be kept Humble, Watchfull and Diligent? He may see more of thee, than thou canst see of thy self: and so may know what is best for thee; and shouldst thou not condescend to be disposed of by Him, as He will, and to let Him make of thee, and do with thee, what He will?

7. What if God be about to chasten thee thus, for thy former Negligence, Security, and Unwatchfulnesse, and giving too too much advantage to those lusts, which now, after his awakening of thee, thou would be delivered from? Should not thou bear the indignation of the Lord, because thou hast sinned against Him, as the Church resolved to do *Micah. 7: 9.*

8. Is it not thy duty, the more that corruption stirre, to run with it the oftner to Christ, that He may subdue it, and put it to silence? May not thou improve this to advantage, by making many errands to Him?

9. May it not come in a day, that hath not come in a year? Art thou sure, that all thy paines shall be in vaine? Or thinks thou, that all his children have gotte victory alike soon over their lusts? What cause is there then to complaine thus?

10. May not all this convince thee, that it is thy duty to wait on Him, in the use of his appointed

pointed meanes, and to be patient, standing fast to thy post, resolving, when thou hast done all, yet to stand?

II. May not this satisfy thee, that God through grace accepteth thy labour and wrestling, as thy duty, and accounteth it service to Him, and obedience?

But againe, it may possibly be *Objected* thus: So long as I am in this condition, kept under with my lusts, I cannot get God glorified and served, as He ought to be.

I answer, Though so long as it is so with thee, thou cannot glorifie and serve Him, in such a particular manner, as others, who have gote more victory over those evils, under which thou art groaning; yet God can get glory and service of thee another way: as,

1. By thy *Submission* with calmnesse of spirit, to his wise dispensations, when thou dar not speak against Him, and say with *Rebecca*, in another case, if it be so, *why am I thus?* But sweetly and willingly casts thy self downe at his feet, saying, *good is the will of the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good &c.*

2. By thy *Patient onwaiting*, when thou art not wearying, nor fainting; but saying, why should I not waite upon the great king's leasure; Is He not free to come, when He will? Dar I set limites to the holy one of Israel?

3. By thy *Humility*, when thou blesteth Him for keeping thee so long out of hell; and thinkesth much of his giving thee grace to see, and observe the stirrings of corruption, which carnall wreat-

but on the contrary, art helped to stand, and to resist sin, to cry out against it, to fight as thou canst, and at least not to yeeld?

6. What if God see it for thy advantage, that thou be kept so in exercise for a time, to the end thou may be kept Humble, Watchfull and Diligent? He may see more of thee, than thou canst see of thy self: and so may know what is best for thee; and should thou not condescend to be disposed of by Him, as He will, and to let Him make of thee, and do with thee, what He will?

7. What if God be about to chasten thee thus, for thy former Negligence, Security, and Unwatchfulness, and giving too too much advantage to those lusts, which now, after his awakening of thee, thou would be delivered from? Should not thou bear the indignation of the Lord, because thou hast sinned against Him, as the Church resolved to do *Micah. 7. 9.*

8. Is it not thy duty; the more that corruption stirreth to run with it the closer to Christ, that He may subdue it, and put it to silence? May not thou improve this to advantage, by making many errands to Him?

9. May it not come in a day, that hath not come in a year? Art thou sure, that all thy paines shall be in vaine? Or think thou, that all thy children have gotte victory like food over their lusts? What cause is there then to complaine thus?

10. May not all this convince thee, that it is thy duty to wait on Him, in thankes of his ap-
pointed

pointed meanes, and to be patient, standing fast to thy post, resolving, when thou hast done all, yet to stand?

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thou never perceive, and helping thee to withstand, and complean of corruption, which they ~~twice~~ comply with.

4. By thy *Hatred of sin*, when all that ~~Satan~~ can do cannot make thee comply with those lusts, or sweetly imbrace those vipers, or lye down in peace with those rotten members of the old man, as others do.

5. By thy *Watchfulness*; when all thy disappointments cause thee, the more earnestly, watch against thar enemy.

6. By thy *Abiding faith*; when still thou art carrying sin in its lusts to Christ to kill and subdue, as beleeving the tenour of the gospel, and the Covenant.

7. By thy *Hope*, which appeareth by thy despairing and giving over the matter as a hopelesse businesse, and turning aside to other courses.

8. By thy *Praying*, when thou cryest to Him continually for help, who only can help.

9. By thy *Wrestling* and standing against opposition, for thereby is *his strength made perfect in weaknesse*, 2. Cor. 12: 9.

10. By thine *Obedience*. For it is his command, that thou stand and fight this good fight of faith.

So that if thou hast a desire to glorify Him, thou wants not occasion to do it, even in this condition wherein thou complaineest, that thou cannot glorify Him glorified. And if those grounds do not iustifie thee, it is to be feared, that it is not so much a desire to glorifie Him, that moveth thee to cry

earnestly, for actual delivery from the trouble of the flesh, and the lusts thereof, as something else, which thou may search after and finde out, such as love to ease, quietness, applause and commendation of others, or the like.

But in the Third place it may be objected, it is not promised, that sinne shall not have dominion over us, as not being under the law, but under grace? Rom. 6. 14. How can we then but be troubled, when we finde not this promise made good?

I Answer. 1. Sin is not always victorious and domineering, when it seemeth to rage and strive most; your opposition therunto, fighting and wrestling against it, sheweth that it hath not full dominion: So long as an invading usurper is opposed, he hath not full dominion, nor having peaceable possession of what he is seeking, and thus the promise is in part accomplished.

2. Victory and a full conquest over the flesh, and the lusts thereof, is not promised to any believer, at his first appearing in the fields to fight, nor granted to all, in any measure, at their first putting on their armour.

3. Therefore it is thy part to fight on, and waite for that full victory, viz that sin shall not have dominion over thee; for it shall come in due time.

4. God hath his own time and seasons, wherein he accomplisheth his promises. And we must leave Him a latitude, both as to the time when, and as to the manner how; and as to the degree. In which, He shall make good his promises; and He is wise in his dispensations.

Therefore though the promise as yet appeareth not to be accomplished, there is no true cause of trouble of minde; because it shall be afterward fully accomplished; and thy wrestling against sin, sayeth that it is in a great measure accomplished already; because where it hath a full dominion, it suppresseth all opposition or contradiction, except some faint resistance, which a naturall conscience, for carnall ends, on carnall principles & grounds, may, now or then, make against this or that particular corruption, which occasioneth shame, disgrace, losse, challenges of a carnall conscience, and disquietnesse that way, when yet it is not hated nor wrestled against as sin, or as a member of the old man, & the body of death. The objecter would consider, that having subjected his consent to Christ, he is delivered really from that naturall state of bondage under sin as a lawfull Lord, howbeit the objecter, now wanting a little, is making new objections, to trouble the peace and quiet of the soul.

Fourthly, It may be said, But what can then, in the meane time, keep up the heart of a poor soul from sinning?

Answer. Several things, if rightly considered, might helpe to support the soul, in this case, as

1. That they are helped to wrestle against this body of death, in all the members of it, so soon, as they discover themselves, were it their right eye, and right hand.

2. That those lusts gaine not ground upon them; or if they do seem to gaine ground, yet they

they attaine not to a full dominion, nor gaining their consent.

3. That God is faithfull, and therefore the promised victory shall be had, in due time, and Satans head shall certanely be bruised.

4. That the wrestling soul is about his duty, carrying as a good souldier of Jesus Christ, fighting the battels of the Lord, and waiting on Him in faith and hope.

But further *Fifth*, some may say, If I were kepted from yeelding, my wrestling and standing would yeeld me some comfort; but when lust so stirreth, as that it conceiveth, and bringeth forth sin James 1: 15. what can support or comfort me then?

Answer. 1. Corruption can not stirre in us, but therein we sinne, for the very first rise, the *motus primo-primi*, as they are called, are sinfull, being contrare to the holy law of God: and the very stirring of that Old man, is our sin, for his sinfull and rebellious against God; yea it is very enmity & rebellion it self; when Satan cometh with a temptation from without, he findeth alwayes much in us, to interraine the temptation. So that the very stirring of corruption, which is occasioned by the temptation from without, is our guilt.

2. It is true, it is our duty, to set against the first rising and motions of corruption, when it first enticeth, before it hath conceived or brought forth sin: and it will argue grace in life and in action, to be able to hinder the motions of lust so farre, that it shall not conceive and bring forth sin. Yet we may not say, that there is no grace in the soul, or no

measure of Mortification attained, where lust sometimes not only enticeth, but conceiveth and bringeth forth sin. The sad experience of many of God's workies, registered in the word, cleareth this abundantly. We must not say, Such an one is fallen, Therefore he is dead. Paul reasoneth otherways *Rom. 7.*

3. Yet even then, when lust conceiveth and bringeth forth sin, this may comfort and bear up the heart of a poor beleever, 1. That though corruption prevail so far, as to bear down all opposition & run downe all that standeth in its way; yet it getteth not the full consent of the soul, there is still a party for God, in the soul, that opposeth, so far as to protest against it, or at least, to dissent from it, and not to will, that which yet is done, and positively to will that which cannot be gotten effectuated. 2. And farther this may bear up the poor soul, that there is a party within, which, though for a time, during the violent overruning of corruption, can do little more than sigh & groan in a corner, yet is waiting & longing for an opportunity, when it may appear more for God, and against that wicked usurper. 3. So also this may comfort the poor soul, that as it perceiveth corruption stirring, and the old man moving and member or other, it runneth away to the king; and when it is not able to apprehend the Treator, & take him captive to the court of justice, doth there discover the Traitor, and tell the king, that there is such or such a traitor, setting such and such rebellion against Him, and his laws; and complaine, and seek help to take the rebell prisoner, and bring

him bound hand and foot to the King, that He may give out sentence against him; that is, when he can do no more against that raging enemy, on which his complaint to the Lord, & lyes before Him, sighing & groaning for help, & strength to withstand, and oppose more this enemy.

Lastly some may yet Object & say, if it were not worse with me, than it is with others, I could then be satisfied: but I see some mightily prevailing over corruption, and I am still as under; and can get no victory: and can I choose but be sad at this?

I Answer. 1. Dost thou know for a certainty, that those persons, whose condition thou judgest happy, are altogether free of the inward stirrings of those lusts, that thou art brought under by? Or dost thou know for a certainty, that they are not under the power of some other corruption, as thou thinkest thy self under the power of that corruption, wherein thou compleakest? What knowest thou then, but they may be as much complaining, on other accounts, as thou dost on that?

2. But be it so as thou supposest, that there is a difference betwixt thy condition, and the condition of others, knowest thou not, that all the members of the body are not alike great and strong, as not being equally to be employed in works requiring strength? Are there not some young strong men, in Christs family, & some that are but babes? May not a Captain send some of his souldiers to one post, where they shall possibly see the enemy all the day long; and some others to another post, where they shall have no rest all the

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day? And why, I pray, may not God dispose of his souldiers as He will? He knoweth what He is doing: It is not saife, that every one of the souldiers know, what are the designes of the Commander or Generall; nor is it alwayes fit for us to know, or to enquire, what may be the designes of God with us, and what He may be about to do. He may intend to imploy one in greater works than another, and so exercise them otherwayes for that warfare and work. It may suffice, that the prevailing of others may encourage thee to hope, that, at last, thy strong corruptions shall also fall by the hand of the same grace of God.

3. If thy sadnesse savoure not of envy & fretting, thou shouldst blesse Him, that hereby thou art put to the exercise of spirituall sorrow.

4. It is well of this bring thee to blesse God, for the successe of others, because hereby his grace is glorified 1 Cor. 12: 26.

Therefore 5. Let this satisfie us, that He is the Lord, who doth what He will in heaven and in earth; and may dispose of us, as He will; and make of us what He will, for his owne glory. And that we are to minde our duty, and be faithfull at our post, standing and fighting, in the strength of the Lord, resolving never to comply with the enemy: and to rejoyce in this, that the enemy is already conquered by the Captaine, and that we share in his victory: and that the very God of peace shall quickly bruiſe Satan under our feet Rom. 16: 20.

C H A P. VII.

*How Christ is to be made use of, in reference to
Growing in grace.*

I Come now to speak a little to the other part of Sanctification, which concerneth the change of our nature and frame, and is called *Vivification*, or *Quickening* of the new man of grace: which is called the *New man*, as having all its severall members and parts, as well as the old man; and called *New*, because posteriour to the other, and, after regeneration, is upon the growing hand. This duty of growing in grace, as it is called 2. Pet. 3. ult. is variously expressed and held forth to us in scripture: for it is called, *an abiding and bringing forth fruit in Christ* John. 15: 5. *adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge &c.* 2 Pet. 1: 5. 6. 7. *a going on to perfection* Heb. 7: 1. *a growing up in Christ in all things* Ephes. 4: 15. *a working out our salvation* Phil. 2: 12. *a perfecting of holiness* 2. Cor. 7: 1. *a walkeing in newnesse of life* Rom. 6: 4. *a yeelding of our selves unto God, as a live from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God* Rom. 6: 13, 18. *a bringing forth of fruit unto God* Rom. 7: 4. *a serving in newnesse of spirit* Rom. 7: 6. *a being renewed in the spirit of our mindes, and a putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness* Ephes. 4: 23, 24. Col. 3: 10, and the like: some whereof do more immediately

diatly expresse the nature of this change, as to the root; and some as to the fruit, and effects thereof, and some the progresse and advancement, that is made or to be made therein. And all of them point out a speciall peece of work, which lieth on all, that would see the face of God, viz. to be holy, gracious and growing in grace.

This then being a speciall peece of the exercise, and dryly work of a Christian, and it being certaine, as some of the places now cited do also affirme, that without Christ, they cannot get this work either begun or carryed on, the maine difficulty and question is, how they are to make use of Christ for this end?

For *answers* whereunto, though, by what we have said in our former discourse, it may be easie to gather what is to be said here; yet I shall briefly put the Reader in minde of those things, as usefull here.

1. The Believer would consider, what an ornament this is to the soul, to have on this new man, which is created *after the image of God* Ephes. 4. 23. what an excellency lyeth here, to recover the lost glory, holinesse and the image of God; and what advantage the soul reapeth hereby, when it is made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the Saints in light Col. 1: 12. and walking worthy of the Lord *unto all pleasing*, being fruitfull in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God Col. 1: 10. and strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness ever. 11. and what the abounding of the graces of the Spirit make

then, that they shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ 2. Pet. 1: 8. and to be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the masters use, and prepared unto every good work 2. Tim. 2: 21; what glory and peace is here, to be found obedient unto the many commands given to be holy? What hazard is in the want of holiness. when without it we cannot see God Job. 12: 14. How unanswerable it is unto our profession, who are members to such a holy Head, to be unholy? What profit, joy and satisfaction there is, in being temples of the holy ghost, in walking after the spirit, in bringing forth fruit unto the glory of the Father, &c. The consideration of these and other motives unto this study of sanctification, would arme the soul with resolution, and harden it against opposition.

2. It would be remembered, that this work, though it be laid upon us, as our duty, and we be called thereunto of God, yet it is beyond our hand and power: it is true, at conversion, the seed of grace is cast into the soul, new habites are infused, a new principle of life is given, the stony heart is changed into an heart of flesh; yet these principles and habits can not act in themselves, or be brought into act, by any thing that a believer, considered in himself and without divine helpe, can do: But this work of sanctification, and growth in grace, must be carryed on by divine help; by the Spirit of Jesus, dwelling and working within; and therefore it is called the sanctification of the spirit 2. Thos. 2: 13. 1. Pet. 1: 2. The God of peace must sanctify us. 1. Thes. 5: 23. We are said to be sanctified

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fixed by Gods the Father Iud. 1. and by the holy ghost Rom. 15: 16. See also 1. Cor. 6: 11. We would remember, that of our selves we can do nothing 2. Cor. 3: 5. and that He must work in us both to will and to do, of his owne good pleasure Phil. 2: 13. Albeit no beleever will question the truth of this; yet it may be, it shall be found after tryal, that one maine cause of their not growing in grace, and making progresse in this work, is their not acting as beleieving this; but setting about the work, as if it were a work, which they themselves could master, and do, without speciall divine help: Therefore the beleever would abide, live and act, in the faith of this truth.

3. Therefore beleivers would not, in going about this work, either trust to their own strength, to the habites of grace, to their former experiences, to their knowledge and paines, or the like; nor yet would they trust to any externall meane, which they are to go about: because the wisdom, strength and helpe, which their case calleth for, is not to be found in them: yet they should not think of laying these meanes and duties aside; for then should they sin against God, they should preiudge themselves of the helpe, strength and supply, which God useth to convey to the soul, in & by the use of the meanes: and withall, they should tempte the Lord, by prescribing another way to Him, than He hath thought good to take: The beleever then would use the meanes and duties prescribed, and that diligently, seriously and constantly; and yet would leane as little to them, and expect help & reliefe as little from them, as if he were not using,

uſeing them at all, as we ſaid above. And indeed this would be a right way, yea the moſt advantageous and profitable way, of going about dutyes, to be diligent in the uſe of them, becauſe of Gods command; and yet to place our hope and expectation in God alone, and to look above the ordinances for our help.

4. Albeit it be true, that the power and grace of God, alone, doth beginne, and carry on this work of ſanctification in the ſoul; yet, though he might, did He but ſee it for his glory, carry on and finiſh this work in the ſoul, without the intervention of ſecond cauſe or meanes, he hath notwithstanding thought it fit, forth a glory of his name, to worke this work, by meanes, and particularly by beleivers ſetting about the work. He worketh not in man, as if he were a block or a ſtone, but uſeth him as a ratiōall creature, endued with a ratiōall ſoul, having uſeful and neceſſary faculties, and having a body fitted by organs to be ſubſervient to the ſoul, in its actions. Therefore the believer muſt not think to lye by and do nothing: for he is commanded to *worke out his owne ſalvation*, and that becauſe *it is God that worketh in him, both to will and to do*. Becauſe God worketh all, therefore he ſhould worke; ſo reaſoneth the Apoſtle: ſo that Gods working is an argument and motive to man to worke, and not an argument to him to lye by idle, and do nothing. And here is the holy art & divine ſkill, requiſite in this buſineſſe, to wit, for the believer to be as diligent and active, as if he could bring forth fruit, in his owne ſtrength, and by his owne working; and yet to be as abſtracted from

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from himself, his owne graces, ability, knowledge and experience, in his working, as if he were lying by like a meer block, & only moving as moved by externall force.

¶ 5. The soule, that would make progresse in Christianity, and grow in grace, would remember, that Christ is proposed to us, as a copy, which we are to imitate, and that therefore we should let Christ continually before us, as our patterne, that we may follow his steps. 1. Pet. 1: 13. and 1. J. 1. But with all, it would be remembered, that He is not like other examples or copies, that can helpe the man, that imitateth them, no other way than by their objective prospecte. For looking by faith on this copy, will bring vertue to the man, that studieth to imitate, whereby he shall be enabled to follow his copie the better. Of which we know in experience, what this were, to take a look of Christ's Love, Patience, Long suffering, Meeknesse, Hatred of sin, Zeale, &c. and by faith to pore in, till, by vertue proceeding from that copie, we found our hearts, in some measure, framed into the same disposition, or, at least, more inclined to be cast into the same mould.

¶ 6. The believer would act faith on Christ; as the Head of the body, and as the stock, in which the branches are engrafted, and thereby suck sap and life and strength from Him, that he may work, walk and grow, as becometh a Christian. The believer must grow up in Him, being a branch in Him, and must bring forth fruit in Him, as the forementioned places cleare. Now Christ himselfe tell us, that the branches cannot bring forth fruit,

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fruit, except they abide in the vine, and that no more can his disciples bring forth fruit, except they abide in Him. John. 15. Therefore, as it is by faith, that the soul, as a branch, is united to Christ, as the vine, and as it is by faith, that they abide in Him; so is it by faith, that they must bring forth fruit: and this faith must gripe Christ as the Vine, and the Stock, or Root, from which cometh sap, life, and strength: faith then must look to Christ, as the fountain of sanctification, as the head, from whence cometh all the fullness of strength and motion. Christ hath strength and life enough to give out for the fullness of the God head dwelling in Him body; and he is also willing enough to communicate of his fullness, as the relation He hath taken on do witnesseth. The head will not grudge to give to the members of the body spirit, for action and motion; but will as a vine grudge to give sap unto the branches: for life, strength and furniture will (as it were) naturally flow out of Christ unto believers, except they through unbelief, and other distempers, cause obstruction; as life and sap doth naturally and kindly flow from the root to the branches, or from the head to the members, unlesse obstructions stoppe the passage. It is necessary therefore, that believers eye Christ under these and the like relations, and look upon Him, as standing (to speak so) obliged by his place and relation, to grant strength and influences of life, whereby they may become fruitful in every good work; and so with holy, humble, and allowed boldnesse, presse in faith for new communication.

munications of grace, vertue, strength, courage activity, and what else they need: for from the head all the body by joints & bands, having nourishment ministred, increaseth with the increase of God Col. 2: 19. Ephes. 4: 16.

7. For this cause, believers would lye open unto the influences of Christ, and guard against the putting of obstruction in the way, through grieving of the Spirit, by which He conveyeth & communiceth those influences unto the soul; and through questioning & misbelieving Christ's faithfulness, and unchangable willingness, which as a violent humor stoppeth the passage. So then believers would lye open by looking, and waiting, drawing, seeking from Him, what they need, and by guarding against every thing, that may provoke the Lord to anger, whether in omission or commission. Here is requisite a holy, humble, sober and watchfull walk, an earnest, serious, and hungry looking out to Him, and a patient waiting for supply and furniture from Him. This is to open the mouth wide, that He may fill it; to lie before the sun of righteousness, that the beames thereof may heat upon them, & warme & revive them; and to waite as a beggar at this kings gate, till he give the almes.

8. For the strengthening of their hope & faith in this, they would lay hold upon Christ dying, and by his death purchaseing all those influences of life and strength, which are requisite for carrying on of the work of grace and sanctification in the soul: for we must be blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings. Eph. 1: 3. The believer then would
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look on these influences, as purchased at a dear rate, by the blood of Jesus Christ; so that the divine power giveth unto us all things that pertain unto life and godlinesse, through the knowledge of Him; that hath called us to glory & virtue 2 Pet. 1: 3. And this will encourage the soul to wait on, and expect the flowing down of influences, and spiritual blessings, and showers of grace; to cause the soul to flourish, and become fruitful; and to urge and presse more earnestly by faith the bestowing of the purchased benefits.

9. Moreover, the beloved would look on Jesus, as standing engaged and obliged to carry on this work, both in receiving them for this end, from the Father; hence we are said to be chosen in him, before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy &c. Ephes. 1: 4. and atoning for them for He gave himself for the church; that He might sanctify & cleanse it, that He might present it to himself a glorious church, that it should be holy Ephes. 1: 25, 26, 27. He hath reconciled them in the body of his flesh, through his death to present them holy Col. 1: 21, 22. So that the noble covenant of Redemption may stand the certain hope and expectation of the believer, upon double account. First, upon the account of the Fathers faithfulness, who promised a seed to Jesus, viz. such as should be his children, and so be sanctified through Him; and that the pleasure of the Lord, which is pure in the work of justification, should prosper in his land. And now, upon the account of Christ undertaking and engaging, as is said, to bring his sons and daughters to glory, which must be through sanctification.

Sanctification, for without holinesse no man shall see God. And they must look like himself, who is a holy Head, a holy Husband, a holy Captaine, and therefore they must be holy members, a holy spouse & holy souldiers. So that He standeth engaged to sanctifie them by his Spirit and word; and therefore is called the Sanctifier. Heb. 2: 11. for both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one. Yea, their union with Christ layeth the foundation of this; for being joynted to the Lord they become one Spirit 1 Cor. 6: 17. and are animated and quickened by one & the same Spirit of life and grace; and therefore must be sanctified by that Spirit.

20. The beleeuer likewise would set faith upon the promises of the new Covenant, of grace, strength, life, &c. whereby they shall walk in his wayes, have Gods lawes put into their mindes, and write into their hearts. Heb. 8: 10. Jer. 31: 33. and of the new heart, and new spirit, and the heart of flesh; and the Spirit within them to cause them walk in his wayes or statutes, and keep his judgments and do them Ezech. 36: 26, 27. and the like, whereunto the scripture aboundeth. Because these are all given over to the holiest, by way of Testament and legacy, Christ becoming the mediator of the new Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions, that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternall inheritance. Heb. 9: 15. Now Christ by his death hath confirmed this Testament, for where a Testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator, for a Testament is

force after men are dead vers. 16, 17. Christ then dying to make the Testament of force, hath made the legacy of the promises sure unto the beleever, so that now all the promises are yea and amen in Christ 2 Cor. 1: 20. He was made a minister of circumcision to confirme the promises made to the Fathers Rom. 15: 8. That the eyeing of these promises by faith is a noble meane to sanctification, is cleare, by what the Apostle sayeth, 2 Cor. 7: 1. Having therefore these promises let us cleanse ourselves — perfecting holinesse in the feare of God. And it is by faith that those promises must be received Heb. 11: 13. So that the beleever, that would grow in grace, would eye Christ, the fundamentall promise, the Testatour establishing the Testament, and the executor or dispenser of the covenant, and expect the good things through Him and from Him, through the conduit and channell of the promises.

11. Yet further, beleivers would eye Christ in his Resurrection, as a publick person: and so look on themselves, and reckon themselves, as rising virtually in and with Him, and take the resurrection of Christ as a certaine paunc and pledge of their sanctification: for so reasoneth the Apostle Rom. 6: 4, 5, 11, 13. we are buried (saies He) with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newnesse of life: for we shall be planted also in the likenesse of his resurrection, and if we be dead with Christ, we beleve, that we shall also live with him, therefore reckon ye also yourselves to be — alive,

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unto God, through Iesus Christ our Lord: and yeeld yourselves unto God, as these that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. The right improving of this ground, would be of noble advantage unto the student of holinesse; for thence he might with strong confidence conclude, that the work of sanctification should prosper in his hand: for he may now look upon himself, as quickened together with Christ *Eph. 2: 5*. Christ dying and rising, as a publick person, and he by faith being now joyned with him, and united to him.

12. Moreover this Resurrection of Christ may yeeld us another ground of hope and confidence, in this work: for there is mention made of the power of his resurrection *Phil. 3: 10*. So that by faith we may draw strength and vertue from Christ, as an arisen and quickened Head, whereby we also may live unto God, and bring forth fruit unto him, and serve no more in the oldnesse of the letter, but in the newnesse of Spirit. *Rom. 7: 4, 6*. He was quickened as an Head, and when the head is quickened, the members cannot but look for some communication of life therefrom, and to live in the strength of the life of the head: See *Col. 3: 1, 2*.

13. Faith may and should also look to Christ, as an intercessor with the Father; for this particular, *John. 17: 17*. Sanctifie them through thy truth, thy word is truth: and this will adde to their confidence, that the work shall go on, for Christ was alwayes heard of the Father *John. 11: 41, 43*. and so will be in this prayer, which was not put up for these few disciples alone.

The

The beleever then would eye Christ as engag-
ing to the Father, to begin and perfect this work; as
dying to purchase the good things promised, and
to confirme the same; as quickened and rising as
head and a publick person, to ensure this work, and
to bestow and actually conferre the graces requisite;
and as praying also for the Fathers concurrence;
and cast the burden of the work on Him by faith,
knowing, that He standeth obliged, by his place
and relation to his people, to beare all their bur-
thens, to work all their works in them; to perfect
his owne work that He hath begun in them; to
present them to himself at last a holy bride; to give
them the Spirit to dwell in them Rom. 8: 9. 11.
and to quicken their mortall bodies vers. 11. and
to lead them vers. 14. till at length they be crown-
ed, and brought forward to glory. This is to live by
faith: when Christ liveth, acteth and worketh in
us by his Spirit Gal. 2: 20. Thus Christ dwelleth
in the heart by faith: and by this, his people become
rooted and grounded in love, which is a car-
dinall grace, and knowing the love of Christ, which
passeth knowledge, they become filled with all the
fulnesse of God Ephes. 3: 17, 19. So that the be-
leever is to commit by faith the work to Christ,
and leave the stresse of all the businesse on Him,
who is their life: Yet the beleever must not think,
to do nothing, nor to lay aside the means and ordi-
nances, but using these diligently would, in them,
commit the matter to Christ, and by faith roll
the whole work on Him, expecting, upon the
ground of his relations, engagements, promises,
beginnings &c. that He will certainly perfect the

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work *Phil. 1: 6.* and take it well off their hands, and be well pleased with them, for putting the work in his hands, and leaving it on Him, *who is made of God to us sanctification.*

Cautions.

As in the former part, so here, it will not be amiss to give a few words of caution, for preventing of mistakes.

1. We would beware of thinking, that perfection can be attained here: the perfect man, and measure of the stature of the fulnesse of Christ is but coming: and till then the body will but be perfecting & edifying, through the work of the ministry *Ephes. 4: 12, 13.* Beleevers must not think of sitting down on any measure of grace, which they attaine to here; but they must be growing in grace, going from strength to strength, till they appear in the upper Zion, with the Apostle *Phil. 3: 13.* forgetting those things that are behinde, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, they must presse toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It must then be a dreadful delusion, for any to think, that they can reach to such a degree of perfection here, as not to stand in need of the ordinance any more. Let all beleevers live in the constant conviction of their shortcoming and be humbled, and so worke out their salvation with fear and trembling.

2. Nor should every beleever expect one and the same measure of holinesse, nor can it be expected with reason, that all shall advance here to the same height of sanctity; for every part of the body

hath its owne measure; and an effectuall working in that measure; and so every joint of the body, supplieth lesse or more according to its proportion, and contributeth to the increase of the body, and to the edifying of it self in love, as the Apostle clearly sheweth. *Ephes. 4: 16.* As in the naturall body, the diversity of functions and uses of the members requireth diversity of furniture & strength; so, in the mysticall body of Christ, the members have not all alike measure, but each hath his proper distinct measure, according to his place and usefulness in the body. Believers then would learne much sobriety here and submission, knowing that God may dispense his graces as he will, and give them to each member, in what measure he thinketh good: Only they would take heed, that their poverty and leanness be not occasioned through their own carelesnesse and negligence, in not plying the meanes of grace with that faithfulness, and single dependence on Christ, that they ought.

3. It would be remembered, that there may be some progresse made in the way of holinesse, when yet the believer may apprehend no such thing; not only because the measure of the growth may be so small and indiscernable, but also because even where the growth in it self is discernable, the Lord may think it good for wise ends, to hide it from their eyes, that they may be kept humble, and diligent; whileas if they saw how matters stood indeed with them, they might, (without a new degree of grace) swell and be puffed up, yea even forget God, and misken themselves and others.

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too. Likewise this may proceed from such an earnest desire after more, that they forget any measure they have gotten, and so despise the day of small things.

4. There may be a progresse in holinesse, though not in that particular, which the beleever is mecting, to his sense and apprehension: for when he thinks he is not growing in Love to, and for, God &c. he may be growing in Humility, which is also a member of the new man of grace, and when he can perceive no growth in Knowledge, there may be a growth in Affection & Tenderness. And if the work be carried on in any joynt or member, it decayeth in none, though it may be better apprehended in one, than in another.

5. There may be much holiness, where the believer is compleaning of the want of fruits, when under that dispensation of the Lord towards him, he is made to stoupe before the most high, to put his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, and pleasantly to submit to God's wise ordering, without grudging, or quarrelling with God for what He doth; and to accept sweetly the punishment of his iniquity; if he see guilt lying at the root of this dispensation. Where there is a silent submission to the soveraigne & only wise disposing hand of God, and the man is saying, if he will not have me to be a frutefull tree in his garden, nor to grow and flourish as the palme tree, Let me be a shrub, only let me be kept within the precincts of his garden, that his eye may be upon me for good. let me abide within his courts, that I may behold his countenance, there is grace, and no small measure of grace.

grace. To be an hired servant is much *Link*
15:19.

6. But withall, it would be observed, that this gracious frame of soul, that is silent before God, under severall disappointments, is accompanied with much singleness of heart, in panting after more holiness, and with seriousness and diligence in all commanded duties, waiting upon the Lord, who is their hope and their salvation, in each of them: and with mourning for their own sinfull accession to that shortcoming in their expectations.

7. We would not think that there is no progress in Christianity, or growth in grace, because it cometh not our way, or by the instruments and meanes, that we most expect it by: possibly we are too fonde on some instruments and meanes, that we preferre to others, and we think, if ever we get good, it must be that way, and by that meane, be it private or publick: and God may give a proof of his Sovereignty, and check us for our folly. By taking another way: He would not be found of the Bride, neither by her seeking of him secretly on her bed by night; nor more publickly, by going about the city, in the streets and broad wayes; nor by the meanes of the watchmen *Cant. 3c. 1, 2, 3.*

8. Nor would we think, that there is no growth in the work of grace, because it cometh not at such or such a prelimited or fore-set time: nor would we think the matter desperate, because of our looking long, and waiting, and asking, and labouring, and yet seeing no sensible advantage: Such and such a

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beleever (sayeth the soul) made great progresse in a short time, but I come no speed, for as long as I have been at this school. O! we should beware of limiteing the holy one of Israel. Let us be at duty, and commit the event to Him.

9. It is not a fit time, to take the measure of our graces, as to their sensible growth and fruitfulness, when devils are broken loose upon us; temptations are multiplyed, corruptions make a great noise, and we are meeting with an horrible tempest shaking us on all hands: for it will be strong grace, that will much appear then; It will be a strong faith, that will say, *though He kill me, yet will I trust in Him.* At such a time it will be much, if the man keep the ground he hath gained, though he make no progress: It will be much for a tree to stand, and not be blown out of the ground, in the time of a strong and vehement storme of winde, though it keep not its flourish, & yeeld not fruit. The trees, which in a cold winter day bear neither leafe nor fruit, must not be said to go back, nor not to grow, because when the spring cometh againe, they may revive, and be as fruitfull as ever.

10. We would not alway measure our graces by what appeareth outwardly; for there may be some accidental occurrence, that may hinder that; and yet grace be at work within doors, which few or none can observe. The Believer may be in a sweet and gracious frame, blushing before the Lord, y^e melting in love, or taken up with spirituall meditations, & wondering, when as to some externall duties, it can finde no present disposition, through some accidentall impediment or other, so that to
some,

for growth in grace. *well 157*

some, who judge most by our wth appearance, "no such thing as the active working of grace in life can appeare."

11. We would think it no small measure or degree of holinesse, to be with singleness of heart pursuing it, even though it should seem to flee from us: to be earnestly panting after it, and hungering and thirsting for it: *Nehemiah* thought this no small thing, when he said *Neh. 1. last.* O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ears be attentive to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to feare thy name.

12. Whatever measure of holinesse the beleever win to, he would take speciall heed, that he place no part of his confidence of his being accepted and justified before God, in it; as if that could come in as any part of the price to satisfy justice: but when he hath done all, let him call and account himself an unprofitable servant: Though beleivers will not be so grosse, as to speak thus; yet sure, their justifying of their holding aback from God, because they finde not such a measure of grace and holinesse, as they would have, looketh too much this way, and sayeth, that they leane too much hereto, in the matter of the acceptance of their persons before God. Now this would be specially guarded against, lest their labours be in vaine.

Objections answered.

An Objection or two must here also be removed, and first some may say: That though they have been labouring and striving and working, now for some long time, yet they can perceive no advancement; they are as far short as ever,

Answer

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Answer 1. Hath it not been found, that some have complained without cause? Have not some complained of their fruitlesse and want of growth, that other good Christians would have thought themselves very happy, if they had but advanced half so farre, as they saw them to have done?

2. But be it so, as it is alleiged, what if the fault be their owne? what if the cause of this be, that they attempt things in their owne strength, leaning to their own understanding, or habites of grace, or meanes &c. and that they do not go about duties, with that single dependence on Christ that is requisite, nor do they suck life, strength and sap from Him by faith, through the promiser; nor give themselves up to Him by faith, that He may worke in them both to will and to do? Should not this be seen, mourned for, and helped?

3. If all this shortcoming and disappointment cause them lye in the dust, and humble themselves more and more before the Lord, the grace of humility is growing, and that is no small advantage, to be growing downward.

4. Withall, they would do well to hold on in duty, looking to Christ for help, and rolling all difficulties on Him, give themselves away to Him, as their Head and Lord, and so continue their life of faith, or their consenting to let Christ live in them by faith, or work in them by his Spirit, what is welpleasing in his sight, and waite for the blessing and fruit, in God's own time.

Next it will be *Objected*. Though, we might wait thus, yet how unedifying are we unto others, when there appeareth no fruit of the spirit of grace

young

Answer

Answer. A Christian behaviour and deportment, under the sence of fruitlesnesse, expressing an holy submission of soul unto God as Sovereigne, much humility of minde before Him, justifying of God and taking guilt to themselves, with a firme resolution to waite on patiently, in the use of meanes appointed, cannot but be edifying to Christian soules; such exercises being really the works and fruit of the Spirit of grace working within.

But *thirdly* Some may say, How are then the promises of the covenant made good? *Answer* 1. The same measure of sanctification and holinesse is not promised to all.

2. No great measure is promised to any absolutely. So much indeed is secured to all believers, as shall carry them to heaven, as without which they cannot see God: but much as to the degrees depends on our performing through faith the conditions requisite, to wit, on condition of our abiding in the vine, of our acting faith on Him &c. and when these & the like conditions are not faithfully performed by us, what can we expect? So the Lord hath appointed a way, wherein He will be found, and will have us to waite for strength and influence from Him; and if we neglect those meanes, which He hath appointed, how can we expect the good, which He hath promised in the use of these meanes?

3. The Lord hath his owne time of making good all his promises, and we must not limite Him to a day.

4. Hereby the Lord may be trying and exercising thy Faith, Patience, Hope, Dependence, Submission, Diligence &c. and if these be in thee and abound, they

shall make, that thou shall neither be barren, nor unfruitfull in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ 2. Pet. 1: 11.

But *lastly* it will be enquired, what can support the beleevving soul, in this case?

Answer 1. The consideration and faith of the covenant of Redemption, wherein both the Fathers engadgment to the Son, and the Sons engadgment to the Father, secureth grace and holinesse, and salvation to the beleever. And whatever we be, They will be true to each other, our unbelceef will not make the faith of God of none effect.

2. The consideration of the noble and faithfull promises, contained in the covenant of Grace, which shall be all made good in due time.

3. If we be humbled under the sence of our failings and shortcomings, and made to mourne before the Lord, and stirred up to more diligence and seriousnesse, that may yeeld comfort to our soul. If we be growing in Humility, godly Sorrow, Repentance, Diligence, and be gripping faster by faith to the Root, we want not ground of joy and support: for if that be, we cannot want fruit.

4. It should be matter of joy and thanksgiving, that the beleever is kepted from turning his back on the way of God, and kepted with his face still Zion-ward; though he make but little progresse; yet he is still looking forward, and creeping as he may, waiting at God's door, begging and asking, studying, labouring, and endeavouring for strength to go faster.

5. It is do small matter of peace and comfort, if we be kepted from fretting, grudging, and repning

at the Lords dispensations with us, and be taught to
be silent in the dust, adoring His Sovereignty, and
ascribing no inquiry to our maker.

CHAP. VIII.

*How to make use of Christ, for taking the guilt of
our daily out-breakings away.*

THe next part of our sanctification, is in refer-
ence to our daily failings and transgressions,
committed, partly through the violence of temp-
erations; as we see in David and Peter, and other
eminent men of God; partly through daily infir-
mities, because of our weaknesse and imperfections:
for in many things we offend, all *Jam. 3: 2.* and if
we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and
the truth is not in us: *1 Iohn. 1: 8.* A righteous man
faileth seven times: *Prov. 24: 16.* There is not a
just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.
Eccles. 7: 20. and Solomon further sayeth *1 King.*
8: 46. that there is no man that sinneth not. This
being so, the question is, how Christ is to be made use
of, for taking of these away?

For satisfaction to this, it would be considered,
that, in those daily out-breakings there are two
things to be noticed: first there is the Guilt, which
is commonly called *Reatus poenae*, whereby the trans-
gressor is liable to the sentence of the law, or to
the penalty annexed to the breach thereof, which
is no less than Gods curse: for *Gal. 3: 10.* For whosoever
shall abide not in all things, which are in the

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Law to do them Gal. 3: 10. Next, there is the
 staine or blose, which is called *Reatus culpa*,
 whereby the soule is defiled and made, in so far, as
 capable of glory (for nothing entreth in there
 which defileth) and of communion and fellow-
 shipe with God, who is of purer eyes, then He
 can behold iniquity. So that it is manifest, how
 necessary it is, that both these be taken away, that
 they may not stand in our way to the Father. And
 as to both, we must make use of Christ, who is the
 only way to the Father.

And this we shall now cleare: and first, speak
 of the taking away of the *Guilt*; that is contracted
 by every sin: and for this cause, we shall briefly
 speak to two things: first, shew what Christ hath
 done as Mediator, for this end, that the guilt,
 contracted by our dayly failings and outbreakings,
 might be taken away. Secondly, shew what the
 beleever should do, for the getting of guilt taken
 away in Christ: or how he should make use of
 Christ, for reconciliation with God after transgres-
 sions; or for the taking away of the guilt that
 he lyeth under, because of his violation of the
 law.

As to the first, We say: Christ, for taking
 away of Guile contracted dayly, hath done these
 things.

1. Christ laid downe his life a ransom for all the
 sinns of the Elect: both such as were past before they
 beleevd, and such as were to be committed after.
 His blood was shed for the remission of sinns
 indefinitely, and without distinction *Mat. 26: 28.*

2. And this was done according to the tender of
 the

the covenant of Redemption, wherein the Father caused all our sins to meet together on Him Esai. 53: 6. and made Him sin of a sacrifice for sin indefinitely. 2 Cor. 5: 21. and so did not except the sins committed after conversion.

3. Having satisfied justice, and being risen from the dead, as a Conquerour, He is now exalted to be a Prince to give Repentance and Remission of sins Act. 5: 31. Now repentance and remission of sins his people have need of, after conversion, as well as before conversion.

4. There are promises of pardon and remission of sins in the new covenant of Grace, all which are sealed and confirmed in the blood of Jesus Jer. 31: 34. ——— for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more: and Chap. 33: 8. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity; whereby they have sinned against me: and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned against me, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Esai. 43: 25. I even I am he that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake; and will not remember thy sins.

5. Though there be no actuall pardon of sins; till they be committed, and repented of, according to the tenor of the gospel Matth. 3: 2. Luke 13: 3. Act. 2: 38. & 8: 22. yet, while Christ bore all the sins of his people upon the crosse, they were all then virtually and meritoriously taken away: of which Christ's resurrection was a certain pledge and evidence: for then got He his acquittance from all, that either law, or justice could charge Him with, in behalfe of them, for whom He laid down his

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his life a ranfome Rom. 8: 33, 34. who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, or rather that is risen againe &c.

6. So that by vertue of Christ's death, therein a way laid down, in the covenant of grace, how the sins of the elect shall be actually pardoned. viz. That at their conversion and first laying hold on Christ by faith, all the sins, whereof they then stand guilty, shall be actually pardoned and forgiven, in their justification: and all their after sins shall also be actually pardoned; upon their griping to Christ of new by faith, and turning to God by repentance. And this way is agreed to by Father and Son, and revealed in the gospel, for the instruction and encouragement of believers: and all to the glory of his free grace. In whom we have redemption (sayeth the Apostle Ephes. 1: 7, 8, 9.) through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein He hath abounded toward us, in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which He purposed in himself.

7. Beside Christ's Death and Resurrection, which give ground of hope of pardon of dayly out-breakings; there is likewise his Intercession usefull for this end: for sayeth the Apostle John 1st Epist. 2: 1, 2. — If any man sin, we have an advocat with the Father, Iesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins. This intercession of his is a special part of his Priesthood, who was the great Highpriest Heb. 4: 14, 16. and a completing
part

Part Heb. 8:4 & 9: 8. and upon this account it is, that He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God through Him, because He liveth for ever to make intercession for them Heb. 7: 25. for by his intercession is the work of redemption carryed on, the Purchased benefites applyed; and particularly new grants of remission are through his intercession issued forth. He pleading and interceeding, in a way suteable to his glorified condition, upon his death and propitiation made, while he was upon the crosse, accepted of the Father, and declared to be accepted by his resurrection, ascension, and sitting at the Fathers right hand. And thus, as beleevers are reconciled to God by Christs death, they are saved by his life. Rom. 5: 10. So that Christs living for to be an intercessour, makes the beleevers salvation sure; and so layeth down'a ground for taking away of dayly outbreakings, which, if not taken away, would hinder and obstruct the beleevers salvation.

8. And as for the condition requisite to renewed pardon, viz *faith* and *Repentance*, Christ is the worker of both: for He is a Prince exalted to give *Repentance*, first and last Act. 4: 30. and as He is the author of *faith*, so He is the finisher of it Heb. 12: 2.

As to the second particular, namely, what beleevers should do for getting the guilt of their dayly failings and outbreakings taken away by Christ: or how they should make use of Christ for this end; I shall for clearing of it, propose those things to consideration.

1. We would beware to think, that all our after actual

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actuell transgressions are actually pardoned, either when Christ dyed, or when we first beleaved in Christ, as some suppose; for sin cannot properly be said to be pardoned before it be committed, David was put to sue out for pardon, after his actuell transgression was committed; and not for the mere sense and feeling of the pardon, or the intimation of it to his Spirit, when he cryed out Psal. 51: 2. — blot out my transgressions, wash me &c. & vers. 9. hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities and vers. 14. deliver me from blood guiltinesse. Sure when he spoke thus, he sought some other thing, than intimation of pardon to his sense and conscience; for that he desired also, but in far more clear expressions vers. 8. make me to hear joy and gladnesse &c. and vers. 12. restore unto me the joy of thy salvation &c. Scripture phrases to expresse remission import this, viz. Covering of sin, Pardoning of debts, Blotting out of sins, Hiding of God's face from sins, not Remembering of them, Casting of them behinde his back, Casting of them into the sea, Removing of sins Psal. 103: 12. a lifting off of sin, or Taking it away, a Non-imputation of sin Psal. 33: 1, 2. These and the like phrases, though many of them be metaphoricall; yet do all of them clearly evince, that sin must first have a being, before it can be pardoned. The same is clearly imported by the gospel conditions, requisite before Pardon, such as acknowledgment of sin 1 Iob. 1: 9. which we see was practised by the worthies of old, David Psal. 32. & 51. Nehemiah Chap. 9. Ezra Chap. 9. & Daniel Chap. 9. Confessing and Forsaking of it Prov. 28: 13. Sorrowing for it & Repenting of it, and laying hold on Christ by faith, &c.

&c. The reason why I propose this, is not only to guard against this *antinomian* error; but also to guard the soul from security, to which this doctrine hath a naturall tendency: for if a person once think, that all his sins were pardoned, upon his first beleeving, so that many of them were pardoned before they were committed; he shall never be affected for his after transgressions, nor complean of a body of death, nor account himself miserable upon that account, as *Paul* did *Rom. 7: 24.* nor shall he ever pray for remission, though *Christ* hath taught all to do so, in that patern of prayer; nor shall he set faith upon the promises of pardon, made in the covenant of grace, for after transgressions, or for transgressions actually committed. *Jer. 31: 34. & 33: 8. Heb. 8: 12.* and so there shall be no use made of *Christ* for new pardons, or remissions of new sins.

2. The beleever would remember, that, among other things, antecedently requisite to remission of posterior actuall transgressions, gospel Repentance is especially required. *Luk. 13: 3. Mat. 3: 2. Exeek. 18: 28, 30, 32. Luk. 15: 17, 18 Hos. 2: 6, 7. Exeek. 14: 6.* whereby a Sinner, through the helpe of the Spirit, being convinced not only of his hazard by reason of sin, but also of the filthinesse and hatefulnesse of sin; and having a sight of the mercy of *God* in *Christ* *Jesus* to sinners, turning from their sin, doth turne from those sins unto *God*, with a full purpose of heart, in his strength, to follow Him and obey his lawes: and hereby the soul is brought to loath its self and sin, and is made willing to desire, seek for, accept of and prize redemption from sins. This makes them more wary in time

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time coming, and carefull: for behold (sayes the Apostle 2 Cor. 7: 11.) This self same thing that yee sorowed after a godly sort, what carefulnesse it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; what indignation, yea what feare; yea, what vehement desire; yea what Zeal; yea what revenge; &c. Thus is God glorified in his justice, Psal. 51: 4. and his mercy is acknowledged, in not entering with us into judgement, nor casting us into hell, as He might have done in justice.

3. Yet it would be remembered, that though it hath seemed good in the Lord's eyes, to chuse this method, and appoint this way of obtaining pardon of sins daily committed, for the glory of his grace and mercy; and likewise for our good, we must not ascribe too much unto Repentance, in the matter of pardon: we must not make it a cause of our remission, either efficient or meritorious: we must not think, that it hath any hand in appeasing the wrath of God, or in satisfying of justice: pardon must alwayes be an act of God's free grace, unmerited at our hands; & procured alone through the merites of Christ: we must not put repentance in Christ's room and place, nor ascribe any imperfection unto his merites, as if they needed any supply from any act of ours: we must beware of leaning to our Repentance, and godly Sorrow, even so far as to think to commend ourselves to God thereby, that we may obtaine pardon.

4. The beleever would consider seriously the dreadfulnesse of their condition, who are lying under the lash of the law for sin. The law sayeth, *and is cursed*

cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the law: and every sin is a transgression of the law: so that, according to law and justice, they are in hazard: for every sin in it self exposeth the sinner to eternal wrath, sin being an offence against God who is a righteous judge, and a breach of his law. A right sight and apprehension of this, would serve to humble the sinner before God, and make him more earnest in seeking out for pardon, that this obligation to punishment might be removed.

5. The believer would not only consider the sin it self; but also take notice of all its *Aggravations*. There are peculiar aggravations of some sins, taken from the time, manner and other circumstances, which rightly considered will helpe forward the work of humiliation: And the sins of believers have this aggravation, above the sins of others, that they are committed against more love, and speciall Love, and against more opposition and contradiction of the grace of God within the soul, against more light and conviction &c. and therefore, their humiliation upon this account ought to be singular and serious, So was it with *David*, when he took notice of the speciall aggravations of his sin *Psal.* 51: 4, 6, 14. and *Exra.* cap. 9. & *Nehemiah* Cap. 9. and *Daniel* Cap 9. This considering of sin with its due aggravations, would helpe to prize mercy at an high rate, and cause the soul more willingly waite for, and more seriously seek after Remission; knowing that God is more angry for great sins, than for sins of infirmity, and may therefore pursue the same with sorer judgments.

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ments, as He broke *David's* bones, withdrew his comforts &c.

6. The beleever would be convinced of an *impossibility of doing any thing in himself*, which can procure pardon at the hands of God: should he weep, cry, afflict himself, & pray never so, all will do nothing by way of merite; for the taking away of the least sin, that ever he committed; and the conviction of this would drive him to despaire in himself; and be a meane to bring him cleanly off himself, and to look out for mere mercy in Christ Jesus. So long as, through the deceitfulnesse of Satan, the false heart inclineth to the old byas, and hath its eye upon any thing in itself, from whence it draweth its hope and expectation of pardon and acceptance, it will not purely act faith on Christ for this end, and so he will lose all his labour, and in end be disappointed. Therefore the beleever would guard against this, and that so much the more, that the false deceitful heart is so much inclined thereto; and that this deceit can sometime work so cunningly, that it can hardly be discerned, being faired over with many false glosses and pretexts; and that it is so dishonourable to Jesus, and hurtful and prejudicial to the soul.

7. The beleever would act faith on the promises of pardon in the new covenant, as having a right to them through Jesus Christ, and challenge with humble boldnesse, the fulfilling of the same, according to that *1. Joh. 1:9* *If we confesse our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.* So that the beleever may not only take hold of mercy, and grace in God, as an encouragement and invitation

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to go to God for pardon ; but even of the justice and righteousness of God , because of his faithful promises : and the beleever would have here a special eye to Christ , *in whom all the promises are yea and amen* ; and look for the accomplishment of them through Him , and for his sake alone.

8. Faith would eye Christ , *as hanging upon the crosse* , and offering up himself , through the eternall Spirit , a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice , for all the sins of his own chosen ones : we cannot think , that Christ bare but some of their sins , or only their sins , committed before conversion ; and if he bare all , as the Father laid all upon Him , the beleever is to lay hold on Him by faith , as hanging on the crosse , as well for taking away of the guilt of sins committed after conversion , as before. His sacrifice was a sacrifice for all , *and He bare our sins without distinction or exception , in his owne body on the tree* , 1. Pet. 2: 24. David had his eye on this , when he cryed out Psal. 51: 7. *purge me with hyssope* , hyssope being sometimes used in the legall purifications , which typified that purification , which Christ really wrought , when He gave himself a sacrifice for sin Levit. 14: 6. Num. 19: 18.

9. The beleever looking on Christ , dying as a Mediator , to pacifie the wrath of God , and to make satisfaction to the justice of God , for the sins of his people , would *renew his consent unto that gracious , and wise contrivance of heaven* , of pardoning sins , through a crucified Mediator , that mercy and Justice might kisse each other , and be glorified together : and declare againe his full satisfaction
- with

with Christ's satisfying of justice for him, and taking away the guilt of his sins, by that blood, that was shed upon the crosse, by taking those sins, whereof now he standeth guilty, and for which he is desirous of pardon, and by faith nailing them to the crosse of Christ, and rolling them on his shoulders, that the guilt of them, as well as of the rest, might be taken away, through the merites of his death and satisfaction. Thus the beleever consenteth to that noble act of free grace, whereby the Lord made all our sins to meet together on Christ, when he taketh those particular sins, wherewith now he is troubled, and casteth them in into the heape, that Christ, as the true scape-goat, may carry all away. This is to lay our hands on the head of our sacrifice.

10. The beleever hath another ground of comfort to gripe to, in this case, and that is, Christ's eternall Priesthood, whereby he makes intercession for the transgressions of his people, and as their advocate and atturnay with the father, pleadeth their cause, whereby he is able to save them to the last, and uttermost step of their jurnay, and so to save them from the guilt of all casuall and emergent sins, that might hinder their salvation: So that the beleever is to put those sins, that now he would have pardoned, into the hands of Christ, the everlasting intercessour and allsufficient advocat, that He, by vertue of his death, would obtaine a new pardon of these their failings, and transgressions, and deliverance from the guilt thereof; and their acceptance with the Father notwithstanding of these transgressions.

11. Thus

11. Thus beleivers cyeing Christ as Dying, Riseing againe, Ascending, and as Sitting at the Fathers right hand, there to be a Priest for ever, after the order of *Melchisedeck*, and to interceed for his owne, and to see to the application of what benefites, pardons, favours, and other things they need, from all which they have strong ground of comfort and of hope, yea and assurance of pardon, would acquiesce in this way, and having laid those particular sins, under the burden whereof they now groan, on Christ the mediator, dying on the crosse to make satisfaction, and ariseing to make application of what was purchased, and having put them in his hand, who is a faithfull High priest, and a noble Intercessour, would remember, that Christ is a *Prince exalted to give Repentance and Remission of sins*: and so expect the sentence even from Him, as a Prince now exalted, and as having obtained that of the Father, even a power to forgive sins, justice being now sufficiently satisfied, through his death; yea & as *having all power in heaven and in earth*, as being *Lord both of the dead and of the living*. Sure a right thought of this would much quiet the soules, in hope of obtaining pardon through Him, seing now the pardon is in his owne hand, to give out, who loved them so dearly, that he gave himself to the death for them, and shed his heart blood to satisfie justice for their transgressions. Since he, who hath procured their pardon at so dear a rate, and is their attornay to agent their businesse at the throne of grace, hath now obtained the prayed-for & looked-for pardon, and hath it in his owne hand, they will not question but He will
give

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give it, and so absolve them from their guilt.

12. The beleever having taken this course, with his dayly provocations, and laid them all on Him, would *acquiesce in this way*, and not seek after another, that he may obtaine pardon. Here he would rest, committing the matter by faith in prayer to Christ, & leaving his guilt and sins on Him, expect the pardon: yea conclude, that they are already pardoned: and that for these sins, he shall never be brought unto condemnation; whatever Satan and a misbelieving heart may say or suggest afterward.

Thus should a beleever make use of Christ, for the taking away of the Guilt of his dayly transgressions; and for further clearing of it, I shall adde a few cautions.

Cautions.

1. However the beleever is to be much moved at, & affected with, his sins and provocations, which he committeth, after God hath visited his soul with salvation, and brought him into a covenant with himself; yet he must not suppose, that his sins after justification do marre his state; as if thereby he were brought into a Non-justified state, or to a Non-reconciled state. It is true, such sins, especially if grosse, whether in themselves, or by reason of circumstances, will darken a mans state, and put him to searce and try his condition, over againe. But yet we dar not say, that they make any alteration in the state of a beleever: for once in a justified state alwayes in a justified state. It is true likewise, that as to those sins, which now he hath committed, he cannot

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cannot be said to be acquitted or justified, till this pardon be got out by faith and repentance, as is said; yet his State remaineth fixed and unchanged; so that though God should seem to deal with such in his dispensations, as with enemies; yet really his affections change not; he never accounteth them real enemies; nay love lieth at the bottom of all his sharpest dispensations. If they forsake his law, and walk not in his judgements, if they break his statutes and keep not his commandments, he will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless his loving kindness will he not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail: his covenant will he not break nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips Psal. 89:30, 31, 32, 33, 34. And againe, though after transgressions may waken challenges for former sins, which have been pardoned and blotted out, and give occasion to Satan to raise a storme in the soul, and put all in confusion; yet really sins once pardoned cannot become againe unpardoned sins. The Lord doth not revoke his sentence, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth. It is true likewise, that a beleever, by committing of grosse sins, may come to misse the effects of God's favour and good will, and the intimations of his love and kindness; and so be made to cry with David Psal. 51: 8. *make me to heare joy and gladnesse and vers. 12. restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, &c.* Yet that really holdeth true, that whom he loveth he loveth to the end; and He is a God that changeth not; and his gifts are without repentance. Yea though grieving of the Spirit may bring souls under

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sharp throwes, and pangs of the Spirit of bondage, and the terrors of God, and His sharpe arrowes, the poyson whereof may drink up their spirits, and so be far from the actuall witnessings of the Spirit of Adoption: yet the Spirit will never be againe really a Spirit of bondage unto fear, nor deny his his owne work in the soul, or the souls real right to, or possession of that fundamentall privilege of Adoption; or say, that the soul is no more a Son, nor within the covenant.

2. The course before mentioned is to be taken with all sins, though. 1. They be never so hainous and grosse. 2. Though they be accompanied with never such aggravating and crying aggravations. 3. Though they be sins frequently fallen into; and. 4. Though they be sins many and heaped together. Davids transgression was a hainous sin, and had hainous aggravations, yea there was an heap and a complication of sins together in that one; yet he followed this course. We finde none of those kinde of sins excepted in the new covenant; and where the law doth not distinguish, we ought not to distinguish: where God's law doth not expressely exclude us, we should not exclude our selves. Christs death is able enough to take away all sin. If through it a beleever be justified from all his transgressions committed before conversion, why may not also a beleever be, through vertue of it, justified from his grosse and multiplied sins committed after conversion? *The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin* Christ hath taught his followers to pray, *forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sinne against us*; and he hath told us also, *that we must forgive*

our brother seventy times seven times Mat. 18: 22.
We would not be discouraged then from taking this
course, because our sins are such and such; nay
rather, we would look on this, as an argument to
presse us more unto this way, because the greater our
sins be, the greater need have we of pardon, and so
say with David Ps. 25: 11. *Pardon mine iniquity;
for it is great.*

3. we would not think, that upon our taking
of this course, we shall be instantly freed from chal-
lenges, because of those sins, for pardoning where-
of we take this course: nor should we think, that
because challenges remaine, that therefore, there
is no pardon had, or that this is not the way to par-
don: for, as we shall shew afterward, pardon
is one thing, and intimation of pardon is another
thing: we may be pardoned, and yet suppose that
we are not pardoned; challenges will abide, till
the conscience be sprinkled, and till the Prince of
peace command peace to the conscience, and put
the accuser to silence; who, when he can do no more,
will marre the peace of a beleever, as long as he can,
and stoppe the current of his comforts, which made
David pray, that God would restore to him the joy
of his salvation Psal. 51.

4. Nor would we think, that upon our taking
of this course for the pardon of our sins, we shall
never thereafter meet with a challenge upon the ac-
count of these sins. It is true, when sins are par-
doned, they are fully pardoned in God's court, and
that obligation to condemnation is taken away, and
the pardoned person is looked upon as no sinner, that
is, as no person liable to condemnation because of

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these sins; for being pardoned he becometh just before God; yet we darre not say, but conscience after ward, being alarmed with new transgressions, may mistake, as people suddenly put into a fright are ready to do: nor dar we say, that God will not permit Satan, to upbraid us with those sins, which have been blotted out long ago, as he suffered *Shimei*, who was but an instrument of Satan, to cast up to *David* his blood guiltinesse; which had been pardoned long before. The Lord may think good to suffer this, that his people may be kept humble; and made more tender and watchfull, in all their ways.

5. Beleevers would not mis-improve or abuse the great beneficency of free grace, & take the greater liberty to sin, because there is such a sure, safe, and pleasant way of getting those sins blotted out and forgiven. Shall we sin because we are not under grace, but under the law? That be far from us, sayeth the Apostle *Rom. 6: 15*. This were indeed to turne the grace of God into lasciviousnesse. And it may be a question, if such as have really repented, & gotten their sins pardoned, will be so ready to make this use of it: sure, sense of pardon will work some other effect, as we see *Ezech. 16: 62, 63*.

6. The beleever, in going about this work of nailing his sins to the crosse of Christ, and of improving Christ's Death, Resurrection and constant intercession, for the obtaining of pardon, would not think of going alone, or of doing this, in his own strength: for of himself he can do nothing. He must look to Christ for grace, to help in this time of need, and must goe about this duty with

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dependence on Him, waiting for the influences of Light, Counsell, Strength, and Grace from Him, to repent and beleeve: for He is a Prince exalted to give repentance, first and last, and He is the author and finisher of faith: so that without Him we can do nothing.

Let the beleever beware of concluding, that he hath got no pardon, because he hath not with no sensible intimation thereof, by the flowing in of peace and joy in his soul. Pardon is one mercy, and intimation of it to the soul is another distinct mercy, and separable from it: shall we therefore say, we have not gotten the first, because we have not gotten both? The Lord, for wise reasons, can pardon poor sinners, and not give any intimation thereof; to wit, that they may watch more against sin afterward, and not be so bold as they have been, and that they may finde more in experience, what a bitter thing it is to sin against God, and learne with all to depend on Him for lesse and more: and to carry more humbly: for it may be, God seeth, that if they saw their sins pardoned, they would forget themselves, and rush into new sins againe.

8. The beleever must not think it strange, if he finde more trouble after greater sins, and a greater difficulty to lay hold on Christ for pardon of those, then for pardon of others: for as God hath been more dishonoured by these; so is his anger more kindled, upon that account: and it is sure, able for the glory of God's justice, that our sorrow for such hainous sins be proportionably greater: and this will likewise increase the difficulty, and ordinarily the effects of God's fatherly displeasure, make deeper

deeper wounds in the soul after such sins, and these are not so easily healed: all which will call for irreparable and proportionably greater godly sorrow and repentance, and acts of faith: because faith will meet with more opposition and discouragement there; and therefore must be the more strong, to go through these impediments, and to lay hold on his crosse. Yet though this should make all watchfull, and to guard against grosse and crying sins, it should not drive any to dispaire, nor to say, with that despairing wretch, *their sin is greater than it can be forgiven*, the ocean of mercy can drown and swallow up great, as well as lesser sinnes: Christ is an allsufficient Mediator, for the greatest sins, as well as for the least. *O for thy names sake pardon mine iniquitie, for it is great.* will come in season to a soul ready to sink with the weight of this millstone, tied about its neck.

9. as the greater sins should not make us dispaire of taking this course for remission; so nor should the small sicke of sin make us to neglect this way: for the least sin cannot be pardoned but through Jesus Christ; for the law of God is violated thereby, justice provoked, Gods authority vilipended &c. and therefore cannot be now pardoned, by reason of the threatnings annexed to the transgression of the law, without a rancome: death is the wages of all sin, lesser and greater; and the curse is due to all sinners greater and smaller. Therefore the beleever would not suffer one sin, seen and discovered, to lie unpardoned; but on the first discovery thereof, take it away to Christ, and nail it to his crosse.

10. The beleever would not conclude, that his
sins

sins are not pardoned, because possibly temporal strokes, inflicted because of them, are not removed: for though *David's* sin was pardoned; yet, because of that sin of his a temporall stroke attended him and his family, to his dying day: for not only did God cut off the childe 2 Sam. 15: 14. but told him, that the sword should never depairt from his house, and that He would raise up evil against him, out of his own house, and give his wives to one, that should lie with them in the sight of the sun vers. 10, 11. So we read, that the Lord took vengeance on their inventions, whose sins he had pardoned Psal. 99: 8. God may see this fit and expedient, for his own glory, and for humbling of them, and causing them feare the more to sin against him. Yes not only may temporal calamities be inflicted, because of sin pardoned; or continued, after sin is pardoned; but even sense of God's displeasure may continue after pardon, as appeareth by that penitential Psalm 51. penned by *David*, after *Nathan* had spoken to him concerning his sin.

Questions or Objections answered.

1. What course shall we take with secret sins?
Answer. This same course must be followed with them: There is an implicite repentance of sins, that have not been distinctly seen and observed, as who can see and observe all their failings? And so there may be an implicite faith acting: that is, the beleever, being perswaded that he is guilty of more sins, than he hath yet got a clear sight of, as he would bewail his condition before God because of these, and sorrow for them after a godly manner.

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ner; so he would take them together in a heape, as a closed bag full, and by faith nail them to the crosse of Christ, as if they were all distinctly seen and known: *who can understand his errours, said David Psal. 19: 12. yet sayes he moreover, cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

2. But what if after all this, I finde no intimation of pardon to my soul? *Ans.* As this should serve to keep thee humble, so it should excite to more diligence, in this duty of going with thy sins to Christ, and to pley him, and his crosse more, in and through the promises, and keep thy soul constant in this duty of runing to Christ, as an all-sufficient Mediator, and as an intercessour with the Father; and thus waite on Him who waiteth to be gracious; even in this particular, of intimating pardon to thy soul. He knoweth when it is fittest for thee to know, that thy sins are forgiven.

3. But what can yeeld me any ground of peace, while it is so, that I see no pardon or remission granted to me? *Answers.* This may yeeld thee peace, that following this course, which hath been explained, thou art about thy duty. Thou art not at peace with sin, nor harbouring that viper in thy soul; thou art mourning and sorrowing over it, and runing to Christ, the Prince of pardons, through his blood, and intercession, conforme to the covenant of redemption and after the encouragement given, in the many and precious promises of the covenant of grace, and, having these promises, and rolling thy guilt on Christ, as thy cautioner, conforme to the manner expressed in the gospel, thou art allowed to beleeye, that thy sins are pardon-

ed, and that thou art accepted in the beloved, and so quiet thy soul through faith, God abiding faithfull and true, and his promises being all yea and amen in Christ.

4. But so long as I finde not intimation of pardon, I cannot think that I have taken the right gospel way of bringing my sins to Christ. *Answer.* Though that will not follow, as we cleared above; for a soul may take the right gospel way of getting the guilt of their sins taken away in Christ; and God may pardon thereupon; and for all that not think it fit to give intimation of that pardon as yet, for wise and holy ends; yet the soul may humble itself for its shortcoming, and still goe about the duty, amending in Christ, what it supposeth is amisse, and renewing its acts of repentance and faith, and beg of Christ understanding in this matter, and so continue carrying sin alway to Christ's crosse, and cyeing his intercession, and waite for a full clearing of the matter, in his good time.

5. But what shall I do with the guilt of my weak Repentance, and weak faith? *Answer.* When with a weak and defective repentance and faith thou art carrying thy sins away to Christ, and nailing them to his crosse, let the imperfections of thy faith and repentance go with the self, and leave all there.

6. What shall I do with my conscience, that still accuseth me of guilt, notwithstanding of my taking and following this course? *Answer.* Despise not the accusations of conscience; but let these humble thee the more, and keep thee closter at this duty:

duty: yet know that conscience is but an under servant and God's deputy, and must accuse according to law (I speak not here of the irregular, furious and turbulent motions of Satan, casting in granads in the soul and conscience, to raise a combustion and put all in a fire) its mouth must be stopped by law, and so the soul would stay and answer the accusations of conscience with this, that he hath fled to Christ, the only Mediator and Cautioner, and cast his burden on him; and leameth to his merites alone; and hath put those sins in his hand, as his advocat and intercessour with the Father; and that the gospel requirerth no more of him: and if conscience should say, that both faith and repentance are imperfect and defective, and that guilt is thereby rather increased then taken away: He must answer againe. True, but I have done with the guilt of my faith and repentance, as with the rest, taken all to Christ, and left all on him; and herein only do I acquiesce; I look not for pardon for my imperfect faith and repentance, yea nor would I look for pardon of my sins, for my faith and repentance, were they never so perfect, but only in and through Jesus Christ, the only Cautioner, Redeemer and Advocat. But further, this deputy would be brought to his master, who can only command him to silence: that is to say, the Believer would goe to Christ with the accusing conscience, and desire Him to command it silence, that he may have peace of conscience, and freedome from those accusations, that are bitter and troublesome. Remember with all, that if these accusations drive thee to Christ, and indear Him more to thy soul, they will do no harme,

harne, because they drive thee to thy only resting place, and to the grand peace maker. But if otherwise they discourage or foreflow thee in thy motion Christ ward, then be sure conscience speaketh without warrand, and its accusations ought not, in so far, and as to that end, be regarded.

CHAPTER. IX.

How to make use of Christ, for cleansing of us from our dayly spots.

HAVING spoken of the way of making use of Christ, for removing of the guilt of our dayly transgressions, we come to speak of the way of making use of Christ, for taking away the filth that cleaveth to the soul, through dayly transgressions: for every sin defileth the man *Mat. 23: 29.* and the best are said to have their spots, and to need washing, which presupposeth filthinesse and defilement *Ephes. 5: 27. Iohn. 13: 8, 10.* Hence we are so oft called to this duty of washing and making us clean *Ezai. 1: 16. Ier. 4: 14. Aet. 22: 16.* David prayeth for this washing *Psal. 51: 2, 7.* And it is Christ's work to wash *1 Cor. 6: 11. Revel. 1: 5. Ephes. 5: 26.* See *Tit. 3: 5.* Now in speaking to this, we shall observe the same method; and first shew, what Christ hath done to take away his filth; and next, what way we are to make use of Him, for this end, to get our spots and filthinesse taken away, that we may be holy.

As to the first. For the purging away of the

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filth of our dayly failings and transgressions, Christ
hath done those things.

1. He hath died that He might procure this benefit and advantage to us; and thus he hath washed us meritoriously in his blood, which he shed upon the crosse. Thus he loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his owne blood. Revel. 1: 5. and this is from all sins, as well such as are committed after, as such as are committed before conversion. Thus He by himself purged our sins Heb. 1: 3. viz by offering up of himself as an expiatory sacrifice to make an atonement, and so procure this liberty. So also it is said Ephes. 5: 25, 26, 27. that Christ gave himself for his Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it — that He might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy & without blemish. So Tit. 2: 14. He gave himself for us, that he — might purify to himself a peculiar people, Zealous of good works. Here then is the foundation and ground of all our cleanseing and purification; Christ's death procuring it.

2. As He hath procured; so he sendeth the Spirit to effectuate this, and to worke this washing and sanctification, in us. Hence it is said 1 Cor. 6: 11. that we are sanctified and washed, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. We are said to be saved by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy ghost, which he shed upon us abundantly through Iesus Christ our Saviour Tit. 3: 5, 6. The sending then or shedding of the holy and sanctifying Spirit upon us, whereby we are sanctified, and consequently purified and purged from our filth,

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is a fruit of Christ's death and mediation, being purchased thereby, and is an effect of his resurrection and glorification, and intercession in glory.

3. He hath made a fountaine of his blood for this end, that we may go to it daylie, and wash and be cleane: thus his blood cleanseth from all sin 1 Ioh. 1: 7, 9. This is the fountaine opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Ierusalem for sin and for uncleannesse. Zech. 13: 1.

4. He hath purchased and provided the externall meanes, whereby this cleansing and sanctification is brought about: viz the preaching of the gospel, which He himself preached, and thereby sanctified Iohn. 15: 3. Now are yee clean through the word that I have spoken unto you. Ephes. 5: 26. the Church is sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water, by the word.

5. so hath He procured, and worketh in the soul those graces, that promote and cary on this work of sanctification and purifying; such as faith, which purifyeth the heart Act. 15: 9. whereof he is the author and finisher Heb. 12. and hope which whosoever hath, purifyeth himself, even as He is pure. 1 Iohn. 3: 3.

6. He hath confirmed and ratified all the promises of the covenant, which are ample and large, touching this cleansing and washing Jer. 35: 8. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me Ezech. 36: 25. Then will I sprinkle cleane water upon you, and yee shall be cleane, from all your filthinesse. So Ezech. 37: 23. — and I will cleanse them. And all the other promises of the covenant, apprehended by

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by faith, have no small influence on our cleansing
 2 Cor. 7: 1. *having therefore these promises, let us
 cleanse our selves &c.* all which promises are yea and
 amen in Christ 2 Cor. 1: 20.

Thus Christ hath made all sure, for the cleansing
 and washing of his people, conforme to that
 article of the covenant of Redemption. So *shall he
 sprinkle many nations* Esai. 52: 15.

Secondly, As to the way of our use making of
 Christ, for the purging away of our filth and
 daylie pollutions. Believers would take this
 course.

1. They would remember and live in the convi-
 ction of the exceeding abominablenesse and filthi-
 nesse of sin, which is compared to the vomite of
 a dog, and to the mire, wherein the sow walloweth
 2 Pet. 2: 22. to filthy rags Esai. 64: 6. to a men-
 struous cloath Esai. 30: 22. and the like, that this
 may move them to seek with greater care and dili-
 gence, to have that filth washen away.

2. They would remember also how abominable
 sin maketh them in the eyes of an holy God, who
 cannot behold iniquity, being a God of purer eyes
 than to behold it Habak. 1: 13. nor can He look
 on it. And how therefore no unclean thing can
 enter in into the new Jerusalem: nor any thing
 that defileth. And this will make them so much
 the more to abhorre it, and to seek to be washen
 from it.

3. They would look by faith upon the blood
 of Christ, that is shed for this end, to wash filthy
 souls into, and run to it as a fountaine opened for
 this end, that they might come to it, and wash &
 be cleane.

4. For

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4. For their encouragement, they would grip by faith to the promises of the new covenant, which are large and full.

5. And remember the end of Christ's death; viz to purchase to himself a holy people, Zealous of good works, to present them to Himself holy, and without spot and wrinkle, or any such thing: and this will be a further encouragement.

6. They would put the work by faith in his hand, who hath best skill to wash a soule soul, and to purge away all their spots; and by faith pray for and expect the Spirit, to sanctifie and cleanse them from all their filthinesse: that is, they would make known, and spread forth their abominations before the Lord, and eyeing Christ as the only great Highpriest, whose blood is a fountaine to wash in, would lay the work on Him, and by faith put Him to wash away that filth, and to purifie their souls by his Spirit, pardoning their bygone iniquities, & renewing them in the spirit of their mindes by grace, that they may walk before him in fear. Thus they would roll the work on Him, and leave it there.

Cautions & Directions.

1. The beleever would in all this work be kept in the exercise of those graces following.

1. Of Humility, seeing what a vile filthy wretch he is, that stands in need of washing and purging dayly, because of his daylie pollutions, and transgressions.

2. Of Love, considering with what a loving God he hath to do, that hath provided so liberally all things

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things for him, and particularly hath provided a fountaine and such a fountaine, whetere he not only may, but is commanded to resort dayly.

3. Of *Thankfulnesse*, remembering how great this mercy is, how unworthy he is, on whom it is bestowed, and who He is that doth grant it.

4. Of *Fear*, lest God's goodnesse be abused, and He provoked, who is so gracious to us.

5. Of *Sincerity*, and godly ingenuity, avoiding all hypocrisie, and formality, knowing that we have to do with Him, who will not be mocked,

6. Of *holy Hatred*, loathing and abhorrence of sin, which maketh us so filthy and odious in the eyes of the Lord.

2. This course would be followed, for the purging away of the least sins: for till they be purged away, we remaine in our filth, and cannot expect God's favourable countenance, nor his warme imbracements, nor the hearty intimations of his love and kindnesse. And a small considerable like spot may grow greater, and provoke God to let the accuser of the brethren, Satan, who alwayes waits for his opportunity, losse upon us, and a conscience wakened may make much of a little defilement, to keep the soul from approaching to God.

3. This course would be followed with every sin, quickly, without delay: for the longer those spots continue, it will be the more difficult to get them taken away: the soul will after some time, become the lesse troubled about them, and possibly forget them; and so they will remaine; and this may occasion at last a sad distance, and provoke God to hide his

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his face, which will cause more bitterneſſe and ſorrow. It were good then, to keep up a Spirit of tendernelle and feare.

4. Let this be our *Dayly work* and exerciſe: for we are daylie contracting new filth: yesterdays cleansing will not ſave us from new filth to day: nor will our running to the fountaine to day, ſerve to take away new ſpots to morrow: new ſpots call for new waſhing, ſo that this muſt be our very life and exerciſe, to be dayly and continually running to the fountaine with our ſoule ſouls; and giving Chriſt, the great purger, much to do.

5. We muſt not think to be perfectly Waſhed, ſo long as we are here; for we will be contracting new filth dayly, our feet will ſtill be to waſh *Iohn. 13: 10.* We will not be without ſpote or wrinkle, till we come home to that place, wherein intereth nothing that deſileth.

6. Let the beleevers recurrence in this matter be wholly to *Jeſus Chriſt* and his blood, and lay no weight on their ſorrow, repentance, or teares, or on any outward meane, which they are commanded to uſe: yet would they not lay aſide theſe meanes, but goe through them to the fountaine, to *Jeſus*, there and there only to be cleaned.

7. They would not be diſcouraged or diſpaire; when their ſpots appear great, and not like the ſpots of his children: for Chriſt's blood can purge from all ſin; and waſh away all their filth, of how deep ſoever a dye it be. Chriſt's blood is ſo deep an ocean, that a mountain will be ſunk out of ſight in it, as wel as a ſmall peeble ſtone.

8. Though Chriſt's blood be ſtrong enough to purge

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purge from all sin, even the greatest; yet they would know, that scandalous spots, or a deep staine, may cost them more frequent running to the fountaine, through humiliation, godly sorrow, prayer and supplication. *David's* scandalous blot cost him more trouble and paines, before he got it purged away, than many others, as we see *Psal.* 51.

9. When all this is done, we must think of having on another righteousness, as our cloathing and covering, in the day of our appearance before our judge, even the righteousness of *Jesus Christ*, which only is perfect, and able to save us from the wrath of God. Let us be never so washen in the matter of sanctification, and cleansed from our spots, we cannot for all that be accounted righteous before God: nor will that satisfie justice, or take away the guilt so much as of one transgression before God. *Christ's* righteousness will be our upper-garment for all eternitie: in this is the finelining wherewith his bride is busked in heaven.

10. At every time we run to the fountaine, with our dayly contracted filth, we would not forget to carry alongs with us the mother corruption, which is the sinck and puddle of all filthinesse: I meane, our naturall corrupted rottennesse and pollution, from whence flow all our other actuall pollutions. We would do well to carry mother and daughter both together to the fountaine. *David* prayeth to be washen and purged, as well from his originall filthinesse, wherein he was conceived and borne, as from his blondguiltinesse *Psal.* 51: 5, 7.

11. Let not this occasion our carelesnesse in watching against sin; for that would be to turne
his

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his grace into wantonness, but rather let it sharpen our diligence in watching against all occasions of sin, lest we againe defile our soul.

13. Not only must we have our bodies, or our outward conversation washen; but our soul within the frame of our heart, our understanding, will, affections, and conscience sprinkled with that blood. The blood of Christ, who through the eternall Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, must purge our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God. Heb. 9: 14. And we must have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. Heb. 10: 22.

Finally. If the beleever fears, that he shall not be able to remember all these particular duties, let him remember this, to wit. To put a soule soul, defiled with originall and actuall pollutions, in Christ's hand, dayly, and leave it with him to wash by his blood and Spirit. And yet remember to lay the weight of his acceptance before God, upon the imputed righteousnesse of Iesus Christ, and not upon his own cleannesse, when thus sanctified and washen, which is but imperfect.

Questions or objections answered.

But alas some may Object, and say, That their very faith which must carry the rest of their filth to the fountaine of Christ's blood, is defiled; How then can they expect to be made clean? *an.* The blood of Iesus Christ is sufficiently able to wash all our filth away; and the filth of faith, as well as of other actions: Therefore, when faith as a hand, is carrying the filth of the soul away to Christ to be washen

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washen in his blood; let the foule hand go with the foule hand. full, give Christ, faith, and all to wash.

2. But what shall I do, when notwithstanding of all this, my conscience shall still accuse me of uncleanness, and cry out against me, as filthy and abominable? *Ans.* Take it away also to the blood of Iesus, that there it may be purged *Heb. 9: 14*; and here alone will we get our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. *Heb. 10: 22*. The conscience must be steeped (to speak so) in the blood of Iesus, and so it shall be cleane; and taking our filthy hearts to this cleansing fountaine, to be washen, we will get them delivered, and sprinkled from an evil conscience, that it shall no more have ground of accusation against us: when we have it to say, that we have put our filthy souls in the hands of the great cleanser, Iesus Christ, and brought all our pollutions to his blood, what can conscience say to us? The Lord, it is true, may suffer our consciences still to bark upon us, and cast up our filthinesse to us, that we may be the more humbled, and be put to lye more constantly at the fountaine; yet when we have fled to Christ, and taken our filthinesse to the open and appointed fountaine, we can answer the accusations of conscience, in law, and have peace.

3. But I am apt to think, will some say. That if I had once taken the right way, to get my sins & filthinesse purged away, my conscience would trouble me no more; but now so long as it doggeth me thus, I cannot think, that the way, which I have taken, is the right way. *Ans.* Though the Lord

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Lord may think good to suffer conscience to trouble a man for a time, though he hath taken the right way, as is said, for a further exercise and tryall to him; yet the beleever will have no losse nor disadvantage, by examining his way, and trying whether he hath laid the matter cleanly over on Christ, or whether he hath laid too much weight on his own humillation, sorrow and paines; and whether he be leaving the matter on Jesus; and expecting to be washen alone in his blood, or looking in to himself, and expecting some helpe in the matter from self. And after tryall would mourne for any failing he gets discovered: and still be about that work of runing with filth to the fountaine. But withall they would go to Christ for helpe, because without Him, they cannot come to Him, they cannot come or carry their soul to the fountaine opened for sin and uncleannesse. So that, in all this work, there would be a single dependence on Christ, for understanding, and strength to go about this work aright.

Thus, have we endeavoured to cleare up Christ's being the *Way to the Father*, first and last; and how all, believers or unbelievers, are to make use of him, as the way to the Father, whatever their condition be; from all which we may see, 1. That such are in a wretched and forlorne condition, who are still strangers to Christ, and will not lay hold on Him, nor come to Him, and walk in Him, and make use of Him. They are unrighteous and unholy, and dayly contracting more guilt and more filth: and they know no way ticher for justification or sanctification, but a way of self, which will

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will prove like the brooks, which run dry in summer & disappoint the weary traveller, when he hath most need. They are without Christ, and so without the way, the only way, the saife and sure way, to the Father. And oh! if all that is here spoken could induce them, to think once of the misery of their condition; and to seek out for reliefe, that they might not only be saved from their state of sin and misery; but brought into a state of salvation through Jesus Christ; so that they might be justified before God, from all that justice, the devil, the law, or conscience, could lay against them, and thoroughly sanctified; and so at length brought home to the Father, saife and spotlesse 2. Upon the other hand, we see the noble advantage of beleevers, who through grace are entered into this way; for it is a full and compleat way, that shall carry them saife home; they shall finde, that He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God through Him. And O if they were sensible of this! How would it excite them to thankfulness! How would it encourage them to run thorow difficulties great and many! 3. We see what a special duty lyeth upon beleevers to make special use of Christ, in all things, as the way to the Father, and so march to heaven in Him, as the only way, march in his hands, or rather be carryed in his armes and bosome. This were to goe from strength to strength, till at length they appeared in Zion, and landed in that pleasant place of rest, where the weary are at rest, and yet rest not, day nor night, but sing praises to Him, *that hath redeemed them by his blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and*

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people and nation, saying blessing, honour, glory & power be unto Him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb, for ever and ever Revel. 5: 9.

13. 4. Hence we may see the cause of the leanness of believers, of their wanderings, of their shortcomings, of their many defilements &c. viz. their not constant making use of Christ, as the way, in all things, according to the tenor of the gospel. Oh if this were laid to heart and mourned for, and if grace were sought to helpe it.

This one point of truth. That Christ is *the way*, well understood, and rightly put into practice, would do all our businesse, both as to justification and sanctification, and were poor sinners once entered into this way, and had they grace from this way to walk in it, it would prove their life and salvation: for it is the marrow and substance of the whole gospel. So that there needeth little more to be said: yet we shall speak, a little to the other particulars in the text.

C A P. X.

The Truth.

Some generalls proposed.

THAT what we are to speak for the clearing and improving of this noble piece of truth. That *Christ is the Truth*, may be the more clearly understood and edifying, we shall first take notice of some generalls, and then show particularly how, or in what respects, Christ is called *the Truth*, and finally

finally speak to some cases, wherein we are to make use of Christ, as *the Truth*.

As to the *first*. There are foure generall things here to be noticed.

First This supposeth what our case by nature is, and what we are all without Christ, who is *the Truth*: as,

First. It supposeth that without Christ, we are in darkness, mistakes, errors: yea we are said to be darkness it self *Ephes. 5. 8.* yea we were sometimes darknesse &c. *John. 1: 5.* and of darknesse. *1 Thes. 5: 5.* yea, under the power of darknesse *Col. 1: 13.* *John. 12: 35.* *1 John. 2: vers. 11.* walking in darknesse. *1 John. 1: vers. 6.* and abiding in darknesse. *1 Pet. 2: 9.* *1 Thes. 5: 4.* *John. 12: 46.* we wander and go astray, as soon as we are borne speaking lies *Psal. 58: 3.* yea we go astray in the greatnesse of our folly *Prov. 5. last.* we are all gone astray *Eesai. 53: 6.* See also *Psal. 119: 67, 176.* So far are we from any knowledge of, or acquaintance with Truth, or with the way of truth.

Secondly it supposeth, that we cannot turne in to the right way: a Spirit of errour and untruth leadeth us continually wrong: like the sheep we wander still, and we weary ourselves in our wandering; and so spend all our labour and paines in vaine. Being under the power of untruth and errour, we cannot walk one step right.

Thirdly. Though all other wayes, beside Him who only is the Way, and the Truth, be false wayes, and by-wayes, leading us away from the true resting place, and from that Way, which is the Truth, yet we are prone, and ready to cleave to those false
and

and erroneous wayes, to gripe to shadowes, and to leane to them, as if they were the wayes of truth: Such as

1. A good heart, which many imagine they have, when they have nothing lesse.

2. Good intentions and purposes for time to come, which such, as were not under the power of error and untruth, would never deceive themselves withall.

3. An harmelesse life without scandalous out-breakings to the reproach of christianity: a foundation on which no wise man, led by truth, would build his salvation, or hopes of eternal happinesse.

4. An outward morall, civil and discreet carriage, which no man can blame, and wherein a heathen can outstripe many, called christians, so that it must be a poor ground to found our hopes upon, and yet many are so blinded, that they leane all their weight upon such a rotten staff.

5. Outward exercise of religious duties, wherein a Pharisee may outstripe many: and yet O! how many build all their hopes of heaven upon this sandy foundation, which none but blinded persons would do.

6. The commendation & applause of ministers & christians, is that which many rest upon: which is a sad proof of the blindness of their hearts.

7. The way of good works and almes deeds, blindfoldeth many, and sheweth that they were never led by truth, or taught of Christ, who is the Truth.

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8. *Some pinching grief, and sorrow for sin, in another way, which people, strangers to the truth, deceive themselves withall.*

9. *A common sort of repentance, backed with some kinde of amendement and outward reformation, is away that many rest secure in, though it lead to destruction.*

10. *Freedom from challenges of conscience, deceiveth many.*

Though these and such like wayes be dangerous, yea deadly, yet how many is there to be found among christians, that have no better ground of their hope of salvation, and will cleave to them to last, as no preaching will make them so much as once question the matter, or suspect that these wayes will in end deceive them; so strong is their inclination to the way of error, though not as the way of error.

Fourthly. It presupposeth also an inclineableness in us by nature to wander out of the way: for being nothing but a mass of error, made up of darkness, ignorance and mistakes, we have a strong byas to error, which agreeth best, with our naturall corrupted temper. Hence is it, that we have such a strong propension to error and mistakes: Whether

1. *Concerning God, and his way of dealing with his Church or with our selves.* O how ready are our hearts by nature, to hatch and soment wrong, unseemly, untrue, yea unchristian, if not blasphemous thoughts and conceptions of his Nature, Attributes, Word, and Works. And how ready and prone are we, to receive and inter-

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tainie wrong apprehensions of all his wayes and dealings with his Church and people? And as for his works in and about ourselves, O what unsutable, erroneous, false, ungodly, absurd and abominable opinions do we with greediness drink in, and foster; yea feed upon with delight? Who is able to recount all the errors and mistakes, which our heart by nature is ready to admit, and foster with complacency? Are we not by nature ready to say, that there is not a God, as the fool *Psal. 14. 1.* Or That He is not such a God, as his word and works declare Him to be; a Holy, Just, Righteous, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient God &c. Or that He is a changeable God, and actually changed, not being the same now, which sometime he was. That He hath forgotten to be gracious, and remembereth not his people in adversity; and so is not Tender and Mercifull. That He hath forgotten his promises, and so is not Faithful and True. That he approveth of sin, because he suffereth the way of the wicked to prosper, and so is not an Holy God &c. Yea do not oftentimes such thoughts as these lodge within the heart of the truly Godly? All which sheweth, how prone we are to receive and intertaine erroneous and false thoughts of God.

1. Concerning *Ourselves*, Supposing ourselves to be borne againe and reconciled to God, when yet we are living in black nature: and who so bold and confident that they are right, as such as are furthest out of the way? Or, on the other hand, supposing ourselves to be in a bad state and in nature, and darknesse, when the day starre from on high

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hath visited us, and brought our souls from death unto life. And who more ready to compleane, then such as have least cause? Or supposing ourselves in a good condition, lively, active, diligent, watchfull, &c. when it is just other wayes, with us: or on the contrary, compleaning of deadnesse, formality, upstitting, fainting, heartlesnesse in the wayes of God, when it is not so. Or, in questioned matters, taking truth to be errour, and errour to be truth.

2-3. Concerning Others. How ready are we to run either to the one extremity, or the other, in judging their persons, and actions?

O! where is the faith of this natural condition? Where is the reall conviction of it? Sure there is but little real beleiving of this, when

1. There are so many, that never so much as suspect themselves, or question either their state or condition, at one time or other; never once imagine that their blinded hearts may deceive them; never once dreame of a possibility of mistaking, and of dying with a lie in their right hand.

2. And so many, that are not lamenting and bewailing this their condition, nor crying out and compleaning of a false deceitful and desperately wicked heart.

3. And so few, that are indeed humbled under the sence of this, and made therefore to walk more watchfully and soberly with an eye alwayes upon their treacherous and deceiving hearts.

4. And so few, crying for help from God, against this deceitful adversary, through dayly experience of the atheisme, hypocrisie, ignorance,

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misconceptions of God and of his wayes, and deceitfulness of our hearts, might sufficiently put it out of doubt with us.

Next. How miserable must their condition be, who are yet strangers to Christ; for they are living in darkness, lying in darkness, walking in darkness, yea very darkness it self, a mass of error, mistakes, ignorance, and misconceptions of all things, that are good; and still wandering out of the way.

Finally should not this preach out to, and convince us all of a necessity of having more acquaintance with *Truth*, with Jesus Christ, who is *the Truth*, that we may be delivered from this wofull and wretched condition; for Truth only can set us free there from.

The *Second* general thing to be noticed here is. That all other wayes and courses, which we can take or follow, that we may obtaine life, beside Christ, are but lies, false and deceitful wayes, there is no truth in them: for He only is *the Truth*, No other whatsoever can beare this epithet: for

1. He only can satisfie the soul in all points: other wayes, whatever we may imagine and dream, can yeeld no true satisfaction in this matter.

2. He only can secure the soul from destructive ruinous courses, which will undoe the soul: all other wayes will fail here; none of them can give the least security to the soul, that they shall not bring him, in end, to destruction and everlasting perdition.

3. He only can bring the soul saife through all
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opposition, and difficultries in the way: no other way can do this; but will leave us in the myre, ere ever we come to the end of our journey.

4. He will not deceive nor disappoint the soul: all other wayes, in end will prove treacherous, and give the traveller a dooful and sad disappointment.

O what a warning should this be to us all, to take heed, that we imbrace not a lie, in stead of Him, who is *the Truth*; and sit not downe with a shadow in stead of the substance. How ready are we to put other things in his place? But whatever it be, that gets his room in the soul, though good and worthy in it self, will prove a lie, Even. 1. All our outward holinesse and duties: yea. 2. All our experiences and great attainments. Yea. 3. All our gifts and enduements. Ay. 4. Our very graces: none of these are Christ; and if we place that hope and confidence in them, which we should place on Him, they will not prove the Truth to us. He alone is *the Truth*.

How sure then should we labour to be, that we do not die with a lie in our right hand: and how carefully should we guard against the trusting in, or leaning to any thing that is not Christ, and whole Christ, and only Christ, and Christ as offered in the gospel: seing this way is only *the Truth*. And no other way will be found so in end, though at present we may finde in it.

1. Some inward peace and quietnesse of heart, as if all were right.

2. Some satisfaction of minde, things being right as we apprehend, but falsly, through the deceitfulnesse of the heart.

3. Some

3. Something like assurance and confidence, that all will be right with us.

4. And hope founded thereupon, which may helpe to ride thorow some stormes, and yet sail us alongh.

The *third* general is this, Christ Jesus is not only *the Truth* in himself, but also in reference to us. The scope of the place cleareth this, as he is *the Way* and *the Life*, for our use; so he is *the Truth*. Not only as God equall with the Father, but also as Mediator, and our immanuel.

As God, He is 1. Essentially Truth, being God equall with the Father, in power and glory.

2. In respect of veracity, he is the God of truth Deut. 32: 4. faithfull in all his sayings Psal. 31: 5. keeping truth for ever Psal. 145: 6.

3. He is the fountaine and spring head of all created truth, for he is the first truth.

As Mediator, and in reference to us. He is full of grace and truth Iohn. 1: 14. He received not the Spirit in measure Iohn. 3: 34. and this Spirit is a Spirit of truth. But of this more, when we come to show more particularly, how and in what respects, he is called *the Truth*, as mediator.

The *fourth* general, which is here observable, is, That he is not only called *Truth*, but *the Truth*, as he is *the Way*, and *the Life*; and not only true, but *Truth*, in the abstract; which sayeth.

1. That He is every way Truth. how ever we consider him, as God, or as Mediator.

2. That all Truth is in Him: all truth of salvation for us is to be found in Him.

3. That all that is in him is truth, his Name

res, Offices, Performances, Words, Works &c. all are true.

4. That He is pure and unmixed Truth: no lie in Him, no error or mistake there.

5. That truth in Him is in its perfection, and excellency: In the truest of men, it is very imperfect.

O what an excellent one must He be? How compleatly fitted and furnished for us! Oh if our souls could love him, and close with him, and rest upon him as allsufficient!

C H A P. XI.

More particularly, in what respects Christ is called the Truth.

BUT for further explaining of this matter, we would see more particularly, in what respects it is, that He is called *the Truth*; and this will make way to our use making of Him. So

First He is *the Truth*, in opposition to the shadowes and types of Him, under the law: Hence, as *the law* (the whole leuiticall and typicall dispensation) came by *Moses*; so *grace and truth* came by *Iesus Christ* John. 1: 17. They were all shadowes of Him, and He is the substance and body of them all. Col. 2: 17. And this is true in these respects.

1. All these shadowes and types pointed at Him, and directed as with a finger the Israelites, who were under that dispensation, to look to Christ the
pro

promised *Messiah*, and to rest, and to lay all their weight, on Him: so that the law was a shadow of good things to come *Heb. 10: 1. Col. 2: 17.*

2. They all terminate in Him, He putting an end, by his coming and performing his work, to all those types, which only related to Him, and to what He was to do: the body being come, there is no more need of the shadow, and the thing typified existing, there is no more need or use of the type.

3. They are all fulfilled in Him, He answereth them all fully: so that what ever was shadowed forth by them, is compleatly to be found in Him. This the Apostle in his Epistle to the *Hebrewes* abundantly evinceth, and *Paul* to the *Colossians* tells us, *we are compleat in Him.* and therefore need no more follow the shadowes.

Secondly He is the Truth in reference to the prophecies of old, all which did principally point at him, and his concernments: his Person, Nature, Offices, Work, Kingdome, &c. and whatever was foretold in these prophecies, is perfectly fulfilled in Him, or done by Him, or shall in due time be effectuated by Him. He is *that great prophet*, spoken of *Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19.* So said the Jewes themselves *Iohn. 6: 14.* *All the Prophets from Samuel spoke of Him*, and of his dayes *Act. 3. 22. 23. 24.* And to Him gave all the Prophets witness, *Act. 10. 43.* And whatever they prophesied or witnessed of Him, was, or is in due time, to be fulfilled in Him. Hence we finde the Evangelists and Apostles frequently applying the sayings and prophecies of the old testament unto Him, And *Luk.*

4: 18. himselfe said, that the prophecy of *Esa* 51: 1. &c. was fulfilled in him. See 1 *Pe*. 10: 11, 12. And Himself expounded to the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*, in all the scriptures, beginning at *Moses*, and all the prophets, all the things concerning himself *Luk*. 24: 27. And thus is He the truth of all the prophecies.

Thirdly He is the Truth, in reference to his undertaking with the Father, in that glorious covenant of redemption: for whatever the Father laid on him to do, that He did fully and faithfully. He was to bear our griefs and to carry our sorrows, and that He did. He was to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was to be upon Him, and by his stripes we were to be healed *Esa*. 53: 5, and so it was *Rom*. 4: 25. 1 *Cor*. 15: 3. 1. *Pet*. 2: 23. His soul was to be made an offering for sin *Esa*. 53: 10. and so it was; for he offered up himself a sacrifice for sin: yea all that He was to do, by virtue of that covenant, he did it perfectly, so as he cryed out, while hanging on the cross, *it is finished*. *Iohn*. 19: 30. and in his prayer *Iohn*. 17. he told the Father *vers*. 4. that He had glorified Him on earth, and had finished the work, which He gave him to do. So that the Father was well pleased with Him *Mat*. 3: 17. and 12: 18, and 17: 5. *Mark*. 1: 11. *Luk*. 3: 22.

Fourthly He is the Truth, in respect of his Offices, which He took upon him for our good: for all the duties of these offices, which He was to do, & what remaineth to be done, He will perfect in due time. Did He take upon him the office of a

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Prophet. He did fully execute the same, in revealing mediately and immediately the whole counsel of God. *Iohn*. 1: 18. and 15: 15. *Ephes*. 4: 11, 12, 13. *Act*. 20: 32. 1 *Pet*. 1. 10, 11, 12. *Heb*. 1: 2. Did He take upon him the office of a *Priest*, so did he fulfill the same, offering up himself an expiatory sacrifice to God. *Heb*. 9: 14, 28. and 10: 17. and becoming a *Priest*, living for ever to make intercession for us *Heb*. 7: 25. And, did He take on the office, and function of a *King*, so doth He execute the same, calling a people to himself out of the world by his word and spirit *Act*. 15: 14, 15, 16. *Esa*. 55: 4, 5. *Psal*. 110. 3. creating a visible Church, a company of visible professors, to profess, and declare his name, which, as his kingdom, he ruleth, with his own Officers, Lawes, and Penalties or Censures, so that the government is on his shoulders *Esa*. 9: 6, 7. who is the Head of the body the Church *Ephes*. 1: 22, 23. *Col*. 1: 18. and this his kingdom He ruleth, in a visible manner, by his own officers &c. *Ephes*. 4: 11, 12. 1 *Cor*. 12: 18. *Esa*. 33: 22. *Mat*. 18: 17, 18. 1 *Cor*. 5: 4, 5. and further he executes this office by effectually calling the elect, giving them grace *Act*. 5: 3. rewarding the obedient *Revel*. 22: 12. and 2. 10. chastising the disobedient *Revel*. 3: 19. bringing his own home at length, through all their temptations, afflictions, and overcoming all their enemies 1 *Cor*. 15: 25. *Psal*. 110. and at length. He shall do the part of a king, when He shall judge quick and dead, at the last day 2. *Thes*. 1: 8, 9. *Act*. 17: 31. 2. *Tim*. 4: 1.

Firstly He is the Truth, in this regard, that He

fully answereth all the titles and names, which he
 got: As he was called *Iesus*, so did He save his
 people from their sins *Mat.* 1: 21. As He was
 called *Christ*; so was He anoynted with the Spirit
 without measure *Iohn.* 3: 34. *Psal.* 45: 7. and
 separated for his work, and endued with all power
 for that effect. *Iohn.* 6: 27. *Mat.* 28: 18, 19, 20,
 and established to be a *Prophet* *Act.* 3: 21, 22.
Luc. 4: 18, 21. a *Priest* *Heb.* 5: 5, 6, 7 and 4:
 14, 15. and a *King*. *Psal.* 2: 6. *Esa.* 9: 6, 7.
Mat. 21: 5. *Phil.* 2: 8, 9, 10, 11. Was He called
Immanuel *Esa.* 7: 14. so was He indeed God
 with us, being God and Man in one person for
 ever: was he called *wonderfull*, *Esa.* 9: 6. so was
 He indeed, in his two distinct natures in one person,
 at which the Angels may wonder *Ephes.* 3: 10,
 11. *1 Pet.* 1: 12. *1 Tim.* 3: 16. was he called
counsellor, so was He indeed, coming out from the
 Fathers beosome, with the whole counsel of God
 concerning our salvation. *Iohn.* 1: 14, 18. and
 3: 13. and 5: 26, and 15: 15. was He called *the*
mighty God; so was He indeed *Psal.* 110: 1.
Mat. 22: 44. *Heb.* 1: 13. *Psal.* 45: 6. *Heb.* 1: 8.
Ler. 23: 6. and 33: 16. *Mal.* 3: 1. *Matth.* 11: 10.
Psal. 83: 18. *Luk.* 1: 76. *Iohn.* 1: 1, 14. *1 Iohn.*
 5: 20. *Tit.* 2: 13. *Rom.* 9: 5. was He called the
everlasting Father, so is He the father of eternity,
 being (as some interpret the word) the author of
 eternall life, which He giveth to all that beleeve
 in Him *Iob.* 6: 39, 40, 47, 51. and 8: 51. and 10:
 23. and 11: 25, 26. *Heb.* 5: 9. and 7: 25. was
 He called *the Prince of peace*, so is He the Prince

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of peace indeed, being *our peace* Mic. 5: 5. Eph. 2: 14. making up peace betwixt God and us Esa. 53: 5. and 57: 19. Eph. 2: 17. Col. 1: 20. Hence his gospell is the gospell of peace, and his Ministers *embassadours of peace* Esa. 52: 7. Rom. 10: 15. 2 Cor. 5: 19, 20. Eph. 6: 15. And he giveth peace to all his Zach. 9: 10. Ioh. 14: 27. and 16: 33. Rom. 5: 1. and 8, 16. and 14: 17. 1. Thel. 3: 17. was He called *the Lord our righteousness* Jer. 23: 6. So is He the same indeed, bringing in everlasting righteousness Dan. 9: 24. and being made of God to us righteousness 1. Cor. 1: 30. & making us righteous 2. Cor. 5: 21.

Sixtly He is *the Truth*, in reference to the promises, which

1. Centre *all in Him*; and lead to Him, as the great promise.

2. Are founded *all upon Him*, who is the only Mediator of the covenant of promises.

3. Are confirmed *all by Him*, and made *yea and amen in Him* 2. Cor. 1: 20. He confirmed the promises made to the fathers Rom. 15: 8.

4. are all dispensed and given *out by Him*, who is the executor of his own testament, and the great dispensator of all that we need; so that what we ask of the Father, He giveth it himself, Iohn. 14: 13, 14.

Seventhly He is *the Truth*, in that He fully answereth all the hopes and expectations of his people. He shall not be found a liar unto them; whatever Satan may suggest unto them, or a misbelieving heart may prompt them to conceive; and their Jealousie may make them apprehend; and
whatever

whatever his dispensations may now seem to say. In end they shall all finde, that He is *the Truth*, fully satisfying all their desires: and granting all that ever they could hope for, or expect from Him. They shall at length be satisfied with his likenesse *Psal. 17: 15.* yea abundantly satisfied with the farnesse of his house *Psal. 36: 8.* and with his goodnesse *Psal. 65: 4.* and that as with marrow and farnesse *Psal. 63: 5.* One sight of his glory will fully satisfy, and cause them cry out, enough. *Ieremiah* is not now saying, as once he did in the bitterness of his soul, through the power of corruption and temptation *Cap. 15: 18.* *will thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters, that fail?*

Eightly. He is *the Truth*, in opposition to all other wayes of salvation: for

1. There is no salvation now by the *law of works*, that covenant: being once broken cannot any more save: The *law cannot now do it, in that it is weak through the flesh Rom. 8: 3.*

2. There is no salvation by the *law of Moses* without Christ: hence *Israel*, which followed after the *law of righteousness*, did not attaine to the *law of righteousness*, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the *works* of the *law Rom. 9: 31, 32.* They went about to establish their own *righteousnesse*, and did not submit themselves unto the *righteousnesse* of God. *Rom. 10: 3.*

3. There is no salvation by any thing, mixed in with Christ, as the Apostle fully cleareth in his *Epistle to the Galatians.*

4. There

4. There is no salvation by any other way or medium, which man can invent or fall upon, whereof there are not a few, as we shewed above: for there is not another name given under heaven, by which we can be saved, but the name of Iesus *Act. 4: 12.* No religion will save but this.

So that He is the true salvation, and He only is the true salvation; and He is the sure and false salvation: such as make use of Him, shall not be mistaken nor disappointed *Esaï. 35: 8.*

Ninthly He is the Truth. In respect of his leading and guiding his people in the truth. Hence He is called a Teacher come from God, *Iohn. 3: 2.* and one that teacheth the way of God in truth *Mat. 23: 16.* A Prophet mighty in deed and word *Luk. 24: 19.* And in this respect, He is the truth, upon severall accounts.

1. Of his personal teaching, God spoke by Him *Heb. 1: 2.* He revealed the Father's minde *Mat. 11: 27.* *Iohn. 1: 18.*

2. Of his messengers sent by Him, as Prophets of old, Apostles and ministers of late, whom he sendeth forth to make disciples *Mat. 28: 18.* and to open the eyes of the blinde *Act. 16: 18.*

3. Of his word, which He hath left as our rule; and which is a sure word of prophecy, more sure than a voice from heaven *2 Per. 1: 19.*

4. Of his ordinances, which He hath established as means to guide us in the way of truth.

5. Of his Spirit, whereby He maketh the word cleare *Iohn. 14: 26.* This Spirit is sent to teach all truth, and to lead and guide in all truth *Ioh. 16: 13.* *1 Iohn. 2: 27.* and sent by Him, and by the Father
ther

ther in his name *John. 14: 26: & 15: 16: & 16: 14:*

6. Of his *dispensations of providence*, within us & without us, by which likewise he instructeth in the way of truth.

Tenthly He is *the Truth*, in respect of his bearing witness to truth: and this He doth.

1. By *Himself*, who was given for a witness *Esa. 55: 4.* and came to beare witness to the truth *John. 3: 10. & 18: 37.* and was a faithfull witness *Revel. 1: 5. & 3: 14.*

2. By his *Ministers*, who witness the truth of the gospel, by publishing and proclaiming the same.

3. By his *Martyrs*, who seal the truth with their blood, and so beare witness to it *Revel. 2: 13. & 17: 6. Act. 22: 20.*

4. By his *Spirit*, sealing the truth of grace in a beleever, and his interest in God through Christ, and his right to all the benefits of the new covenant. *In whom also after ye beleaved, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance. Ephes. 1: 13: 14.*

Eleventhly, He is *the Truth*, in respect that He carryeth towards poor sinners in all things, according to the tenor of the gospel, and the offers thereof: He offers himself to all freely, and promiseth to put none away that come to Him; and this He doth in truth; for no man can say, that he had a sincere and true desire to come to Jesus Christ, and that He rejected him, and would not look upon him. He giveth encouragement to all sinners to come; that will be content to quite their sins, and promiseth to upbraid none that cometh, and is there
any

any that in their own experience can witnesse the contrary? He offers all freely, and did He ever reject any upon the want of a price in their hand? Nay, hath not the cause of their getting no admittance, been, that they thought to commend themselves to Christ by their worth: and would not take all freely, for the glory of his grace? Let beleevers and others speak here, out of their owne experience, in truth and in uprightness; and it shall be found, that He was and is the Truth.

Twelvely He is the Truth, in that, in all his dispensations of the gospel, and in all his works and actions, in and about his own people, He is true and upright: all his offers, all his promises, all his dispensations, are done in truth and uprightness, yea all are done out of truth and uprightness of love, true tenderness, and affection to them, whatever the corruption of jealousie and misbeliefe, think and say to the contrary: He is the Truth. And so alwayes the same, unchangeable in his love, whatever his dispensations seem to say. And the beleever may rest assured hereof, that He being the Truth. Shall be to him, whatever his word holdeth him forth to be, and that constantly and unchangeably.

C A P. XII.

*Some general uses from this usefull truth
that Christ is the Truth:*

HAving thus cleared up this truth, we should come to speak of the way of beleevers making

use of Him, as *the Truth*, in several cases, wherein they will stand in need of Him as *the Truth*. But ere we come to the particulars, we shall first propose some general uses of this usefull point.

First. This point of truth, serveth to discover to us the wofull condition of such, as are strangers to Christ, *the Truth*: and oh if it were believed! for

1. They are not yet delivered from that dreadful plague of blindness, error, ignorance, mistakes, under which all are by nature, a condition, that, if rightly seen, would cause the soul lie low in the dust.

2. Whatever course they take, till they come to Christ, and while they remaine in that condition, is a lie, and a false, erroneous, and deceitful way: for still they are turning aside to lies *Psal.* 40: 4. and seeking after them *Psal.* 4: 2.

3. Whatever hopes and confidence they may have, that their way shall carry them thorow; yet in end they will be found to inherite lies *Ier.* 16: 19. and meet with the saddest disappointment that can be: for in stead of the followshipe of God, Christ, angels, and glorified spirits, they shall take up their lodging with devils and damned souls: and that because they have made no acquaintance with the way of truth; and the way wherein they are is but a lie, and a falshood: and so of necessity must deceive them.

4. All their literal and speculative knowledge shall not avail them, so long as they are strangers unto Him, who is *the Truth*. Their knowledge is but ignorance because it is not a knowledge of Him, who is *the Truth*.

5. They

5. They have none to go to, for help and light, in the day of their darknesse, confusion and perplexity: for they are not reconciled unto *the Truth*, which alone can prove steadable and comfortable in that day.

6. They can do nothing to helpe themselves out of that state of darknesse and ignorance; and whatever they do to helpe themselves, shall but increase their darknesse, and misery: because there is no truth there, and Truth, even *the Truth*, alone can dispell these clouds of errour, mistakes, ignorance, &c.

Secondly. Hence we see the happy and blessed condition of beleevers, who have imbraced this *Truth*, and gotten their souls opened to Him, who is *the Truth*: for,

1. They are, in part, delivered from that masse of lies, mistakes, misapprehensions, errours, deceitfulness and ignorance, under which they lay formerly, and all the unregenerate do yet lyer; and though they be not fully delivered therefrom, yet the day is coming when that shall be, and the begun work of grace and truth in them is a certaine pledge thereof: and at present they have ground to beleeve, that that evil shall not againe have dominion over them, they being now under grace, and under the guidance of *Truth*.

2. Howbeit they have many perplexing thoughts, doubts and feares of their state and condition; and think many a time, that they shall one day or other perish by the way; and all their hopes and confidence shall evanish; yet having given up themselves to Truth, and to *the Truth*, they shall not be disap-

disappointed in end. *The Truth* shall land them safe on the other side. *The Truth* shall prove no lie.

3. They have a fast and steadable friend to go to, in a day of darknesse, clouds, doubts, when falshood and lies are like to prevail, even *the Truth*, who alone can help them in that day.

4. Howbeit the knowledge they have of God, and of the mysteries of the gospel, be but small, yet that small measure, being taught by Him, who is *the Truth*, and flowing from *Truth*, shall prove sanctifying and saving.

5. They have ground to hope for more freedom from errors and deccitfull lies, than others: for they have chosen the way of truth, and given themselves up to the leading of *Truth*.

Object. But do not even such drink-in and receive and plead for errors, as well as others: and is it not sometime found, that they even live and die in some mistakes and errors?

Answer. I grant the Lord may suffer even some of his own to fall into, and to continue for some time in errors, yea and it may be all their dayes, as to some errors, that hereby, all may learne to tremble and feare, and to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. 2. Some may be tryed thereby *Dan. 11: 35*. 3. Others may break their neck thereupon. 4. To punish themselves, for not making that use of *Truth*, and of *the Truth*, that they should have done: yet we would consider these few things.

1. That there are many moe unregenerat persons that fall into errour

2. If his people fall into error at any time, they do not alwayes continue therein to the end. God for his own glory maketh, some time or other, truth shine in upon their soul, which discovereth that mistake, and presently, the grace of God in their soul maketh them to abhorre the same.

3 Or if some continue in it to their 'dicing day; yet they repent of it, by an implicate repentance, as they do of other unknown, and unseen evils, that lye in their soul; so that that error doth not destroy their soul.

4 There are some grosse errors, which a regenerate soul cannot readily imbrace, or, if, through a mistake, or the power of a temptation, they do imbrace them, yet they cannot heartily close with them, whatever for a time, through corruption and pride, they may seem outwardly to do: and that because the very dayly exercise of grace, will discover them; and so they will be found to be against their dayly experience; as some opinions of the *Papists*, *Arminians* and *Socinians*, together with the abominable *Quakers*, which a gracious soul, when not carryed away with the torrent of corruption, and with the tempest of a temptation, cannot but observe to contradict the dayly workings of grace in their soul, and the motions of their sanctified soul, in prayer and other holy duties; and so such as they cannot but finde to be false by their own experience.

Thirdly. Here is ground of a sharpe reproof of the wicked, who continue in unbeleeve; and

I Will not beleeve, nor give any credite to his pro-

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promises, wherewith He seeketh to allure poor souls to come to Him for life.

2 Nor will they beleeve His threatnings, wherewith He useth to alarme souls, and to pouce them forward to their duty.

3 Nor will they beleeve and receive His offers, as true.

4 Nor will they beleeve, that He is the true Prophet, Priest, and king, that must save souls from hell and death, and therefore they will not give Him employment in his offices.

All which cannot but be an high provocation: for in effect, it is to say, that He is not *the Truth*, nor worthy to be beleeved. Let them consider this, and see how they think, he shall take this off their hands. No man will take it well, that another should either call or account Him a liar: and can they think, that Christ shall take it well, at their hands, to be accounted by them a liar? What will they think to be challenged for this, in the great day? Now the truth is, all unbelievers, as they make God a liar (o horrid and abominable crime! Whose haire would not stand on end to hear this?)

1 Iohn. 5: 10, 11, — He that beleeves not God, hath made him a liar, because he beleeves not the record, that God gave of his Son, and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternall life; and this life is in his Son. So do they make the Son of God a liar, in all his sayings, in all his Offices, and in all his works: And they make the holy ghost a liar, in not beleeving that truth, that He hath sealed as a firme truth. They make the covenant

ment of surtyshipe betwixt the Father and the Son
a merelie, and a forgery, o dreadfull! They make
the word of truth a lie, and they make all the saints
liars, and all the officers of Iesus Christ, who de-
clare this truth, and the saints, who beleve it and
test upon it, liars.

Fourthly. Hence is there ground of reproof to
the godly, in that

1. They do not firmly enough beleve his
sayings, neither his promises, nor his threatnings,
as appeareth too oft upon the one hand, by their
faintings and feares; and upon the other hand, by
their carelesnesse and loose walk.

2. They make not use of Him, in all cases, as
they ought: his offices lye by and are not impro-
ven, nor is He gone to as *the Truth*, in cases requi-
ring his helpe, as *the Truth*; that is; in cases of
darknesse, doubtings, confusion, ignorance of
their case and condition, and the like.

3. They do not approach to Him, nor to God
through Him heartyly, and cordially, as *the very
Truth*, and true way.

4. Nor do they rest with confidence upon Him,
in all difficulties, as being *the Truth*, that will
not fail them, nor disappoint them.

5. Nor do they rejoyce in Him, as satisfied
with Him, who is *the Truth*, in the want of all o-
ther things.

Fifthly. The right consideration of this truth,
should keep us in minde of severall great duties:
such as those,

1. Of pitying those places, where this truth is
not heard of, as among Turks and Heathens: or
where

where it is darkened with superstition and mens inventions, as among *Papists*: or where it hath been clearly shineing, but now is darkened; as in some churches now under the prevailing power of corruption: or lastly where it is not received in its power & lustre, as alas it is too little received in the best and purest churches.

2. Of being *thankful to Him*, for making this *truth* known in the world, and particularly in the place, where we were borne, or had our abode; and yet more, for that he hath determined our hearts to a beleeving of this *Truth*, in some weak measure; to an imbraceing of it, and to a giving of our selves up to be led, ruled and guided thereby.

3. Of esteeming highly of every piece of *Truth* for his sake, who 'is the *Truth*'; studying it for his sake, loving it for his sake; holding it fast for his sake; witnessing to it, as we are called, for his sake: we should buy the *truth*, and not sell it *Prov.* 23: 23. and we should plead for it, and be valiant for it *Eesai.* 59: 4, 14. *Ier.* 7: 28. & 9; 3.

4. Of taking part with Him, and his cause, in all hazards, for *Truth* is alwayes on his side, and truth shall prevail at length.

5. Of giving Him employment in our doubts & difficulties, whether (1) they be about some controverted points of truth, which come to be debated, and to trouble the Church: or (2) about our own estate and condition, quarreled at by Satan, or questioned by the false heart: or (3) about our carriage in our dayly walk. In all these and the like, we should be employing *Truth*, that we may be led

led in truth, and taught by truth, to walk in sure paths.

6. Of carrying in all things before Him as true: for He is Truth, and the Truth; and so cannot be deceived, and therefore we should walk before Him in sincerity and singleness of heart, without guile, hypocrisie, or falshood, that we may look like children of the truth; and of the day, and of light, and children that will not lie or dissemble. *Esa.* 63: 8. not like these, that lied unto Him *Psal.* 78: 38. *Esa.* 59: 13.

7. Of taking Him only for our guide to heaven, by denying our own wit, skill and understanding; and looking to and resting upon Him, who alone is the Truth, and so acknowledging Him in all our wayes, depending on Him for light and counsell, with singleness of heart, humility, diligence, and truth in the inward parts.

8. Of giving up ourselves daily unto Him, and his guidance, and denying our own wills, humors, parties, or opinions: for He alone is Truth, and can only guide us aright: and for this cause, we would acquaint ourselves well with the word, which is our rule, and seek after the Spirit, whom Christ hath promised, to lead us into all truth.

Sixtly, should not this be a strong inducement to all of us, to lay hold on and gripe to Him, who is the Truth, and only the Truth? seeing,

1. All other wayes, which we can take, will prove a lie to us, in end.

2. He is substance and no shadow, and all that love Him shall inherite substance: for He will fill all their treasures *Prov.* 8: 21.

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3. Such as Imbrace Him, shall not wander, nor be misled: for his mouth shall speak truth; and wickednesse is an abomination to his lips Prov. 8: 7. all the words of his mouth are in righteousness and there is nothing froward or perverse in them vers. 8. He is wisdom and dwelleth with prudence, and findeth out knowledge of witty inventions vers. 12. Counsell is his and sound wisdom, he hath understanding and strength. vers. 14.

4. He will make good all his promises in due time, and give a subsistence and a being to them all, for He is *the Truth*, and the truth must stand to his promises, and fulfill them all.

5. He will never, nay never, leave his people, nor forsake them. Heb. 13: 5. He is *Truth*, and cannot deceive; he cannot forsake nor disappoint: He is a spring of water, whose waters fail not Esai. 58: 11. Therefore they cannot be disappointed in end, and perish, who trust to Him.

6. The truth will make them free John. 8: 32, 36. and so deliver them from their state of sin and misery, wherein they lay as captives; and from that spirituall bondage and slavery, under which they were held.

Seventhly, This to beleivers may be a spring of consolation, in many cases, as

1. When error and wickednesse seem to prosper and prevail: for though it prevail for a time; yet *Truth* will be victorious at length, and *the Truth* will overcome all. He is *Truth*, and will plead for truth.

2. when friends, acquaintances, relations, forsake them; and father and mother forsake them, truth will

will take them up: He who is *the Truth* will answer his name, and never deceive, never forsake.

3. When riches, honours, pleasures, or what else their heart hath been going out after, prove like summer brooks: for *the Truth* will be the same to them in all generations; there is no shadow of turning with Him. *The Truth* is alwayes truth, and true.

4. When we feare, that either ourselves or others shall fall away, in a day of tryall, and turne from the truth. Though all men prove liars and deceivers, *Truth* will abide the same, and stand out all the blasts of opposition.

5. When unbelceef would make us question the truth of the promises. The faith of his being *Truth* it self, and *the Truth*, even *Truth* in the abstract, would shame unbelceef out of countenance. Shall *Truth* faile? Shall not *the Truth* be true? what a contradiction were that!

6. When we know not how to answer the objections of Satan, and of a false treacherous heart: for *Truth* can easily answer all cavils: and He who is *the Truth*, can repell all objections against truth. *Truth* is impregnable, and can stand against all.

7. When we cannot know, nor discover the wiles and subtility of Satan. *Truth* can discover the depths of Satan, and make the poore soul more acquainted with them; so that they shall not any more be ignorant of his devices, who look to Him.

8. when the thoughts of the deceitfulness of our hearts trouble us, the depth whereof we cannot search. This then may comfort us, that *Truth* can search

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search the heart, and the reins *Ier. 17. 9, 10.*

9. When we cannot tell what our disease and distemper is, and so cannot seek suitable remedies, or help from God, O what a comfort is it, to know and believe, that He is *the Truth*, with whom we have to do, and so knoweth our distemper perfectly, & all its causes and symptoms, *Truth* cannot be at a stand in discerning our disease; so nor can he be ignorant of the fittest and only safest cures.

10. When we know not what to ask in prayer, as not knowing what is best for us; it is comfort to remember, that we have to do with *the Truth*, that is perfectly acquainted with all that, and knoweth what is best.

11. When we know not how to answer the calumnies of adversaries. It is comfortable to know that he is *the Truth*, that will bear truth, when men will not; and will own and stand for the truth, when enemies do what they can, to darken an honest mans good cause. It is comfortable to know, we have *the Truth* to appeal to, as *David* had *Psal 7: and 17.*

12. When we think on our own covenant-breaking, and dealing deceitfully with God. It is comfortable to remember that, though we and all men be liars, and deal deceitfully with Him, yet He is *the Truth* and will keep covenant for ever, He will not, He cannot deny himself. *2 Tim. 2: 13.*

Eighthly, Hence we may certainly conclude, that truth, which is Christ's cause, shall at length prevail: for He is *Truth*, yea *the Truth*, and so abideth truth; therefore must He prevail, and all the mouths of liars must be stopped. So then let us remain

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remain perswaded, that truth at length shall be victorious, and that the cause of Christ shall have the victory: though

1. The enemies of truth, and of the cause of Christ be multiplied, and many there be that rise up against it.

2. These enemies should prosper, and that for a long time, and carry on their course of error and wickednesse with a high hand.

3. There should be few found to befriend truth, and to own it, in an evil day.

4. Yea many of those, that did some time owne it, and plead for it, should at length turne their back upon it, as did Demas.

5. And such, as continue constant and faithful, beloaded with reproaches and pressed under with sore persecution, for adhering to truth, and owning constantly the good cause.

6. Yea though all things in providence should seem to say, that truth shall not rise againe, but seem, on the contrary, to conspire against the same.

Nenthly, May we not hence read, what should be our way and course, in a time, when a spirit of error, is gone abroad, and many are carried off their feet therewith, or when we are doubtful what to do, and what side of the disput to take. O then is the fit time for us to imploy *Truth*, to live near to Him, who is *the Truth*, to waite on Him, & hang upon Him, with singlenesse of heart.

Object. But many even of his own people do erre and step aside. *Ans.* That is true: but yet 1. That will be no excuse to thee. Nay 2. That should

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make thee feare and tremble more. 3. And it should presse thee, to lye neare to Christ, and to wrestle more earnestly with Him, for the spirit of light and of truth, and to depend more constantly and faithfully upon Him, with singlenesse of heart, and to give up thy soul and wayes to Him, as the God of Truth, and as *the Truth*, that thou mayest be led into all truth.

Tenthly, This should stirre us up, to goe to Him, and make use of Him, as *the Truth*, in all cases, wherein we may stand in need of truths hand to helpe us: and for this cause we would minde those particulars.

1. We would live in the constant conviction of our ignorance, blindnesse, hypocrisie, readynesse to mistake and erre. This is clear and manifest, and proved to be truth by dayly experience; yet how little is it beleev'd, that it is so with us? Do we see and beleve the atheisme of our hearts? Do we see and beleve the hypocrisie of our hearts? are we jealous of them, as we ought to be? Oh that it were so! let this then be more minded by us.

2ly. Let us live in the perswasion of this, that He only, and nothing below Him, will be able to clear our doubts, dispel our clouds, cleare up our mistakes, send us light, and manifest truth unto us: Not our own study, paines, prayers, duties, learning, understanding, nor Ministers, or professors, and experienced Christians, and the like.

3ly. We should be dayly giving up ourselves to Him, as *the Truth*, in all the forementioned respects; and receiving Him into our souls as such, that He may dwell and abide there. Then shall the

the truth make us free; and if the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed *Iob. 8: 36.*

4ly. There would be much single dependance on Him, for light, instruction, direction, and guidance, in all our exigences.

5ly. Withall, there would be a waiting on Him, with patience, giving him liberty to take his own way and time, and a leaving of Him thereunto.

6ly. We should, by all meanes, guard against such things as are hinderences, and will prove obstacles to us, in this matter: such as,

1. *Præjudices* against the truth: for then we will undervalue light, and reject all the directions and instructions of the Spirit, as not agreeing with our prejudicat opinion.

2. *A wilfull turning away from truth*, as these *2^d Tim. 4: 4. Tit. 1: 14.*

3. *Addictednesse* to our own judgments and opinions, which causeth pertinaciousnesse, *Pride*, and conceite, as thinking ourselves so wise, as that we need no information: and this occasioneth a self confidence.

4. *Looking too much unto*, and hanging too much upon Men, who are but instruments; crying them up as infallible, and receiving, without further examination, all that they say, not like the *Berians*: *Act. 17.* This is a great hinderence to the receiving of truth, and very prejudiciall.

5. *A neglecting of the use of the meanes*, which God hath appointed for this end.

6. *Or an hanging too much on them*, and so misplacing them, giving them His roome.

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7. *Leaning too much to our own understanding, wit and knowledge &c.*

8. *A resisting of the Truth 2. Tim, 3: 8.*

These and the like hinderances would be guarded against, lest they marre our attaining to the knowledge of Truth.

7ly There would be much of the exercise of prayer: for this is the maine conduite, and meane, through which light is conveyed into the soul. There would also be a serious and Christian reading and hearing of the word, which is *Truth*, and the *Word of Truth*, and the *Scripture of Truth*, and those duties would be gone about, with (1) much self denyal (2) with much singlenesse of heart, (3) with much humiliey. (4) with much willingness and readynesse to be instructed. (5) with much seriousnessse and earnestnesse; and (6) with faith and dependance on God, for his blessing and breathing.

8ly We would beware, as of trusting to our own understandings, so to the judgments of other men: nor would we look to what suiteth most our own humors, nor to what appeareth most specious and plausible: for that may deceive us.

9ly We would lye open to the influences and rayes of light, by exerciseing faith in earnest desires, as also patient waiting for and single looking to Him: mindeing his name and his relations, promises and engadgments; for the strengthening of our faith, and confidence.

10ly We would labour to keep fast, whatever He teacheth us by his word and spirit; & not prove lacking vessels. This the Apostle exhorteth to
Heb

Heb. 2: 1. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip: yea and we should be established in the Truth. 2. Pet. 1: 12.

11ly We would beware of resting on a forme of the truth, as those did, of whom we read Rom. 2: 10. and of holding the truth in unrighteousnesse, as these Rom. 1: 18. and of disobeying it as these mentioned Rom. 2: v. 3. see also Gal. 3: v. 12. and 5: v. 7.

12ly But on the contrary, we would so receive truth, as that it might rule and be master in us, captivate judgment, will and affections, and break out into the practice: and this comprehendeth several duties, such as

1. To have the Truth in us; while as if we practise otherwise, the truth is not in us 1. Iohn. 1: 6. 8. and 2: v. 4.

2. To be of the Truth, as belonging to its jurisdiction, power and command 1. Iohn. 3: 19. Iohn. 18: 37.

3. To doe the Truth, by having true followshipe with Him. 1. Iohn. 1: 6. and to walk in the Truth 2. Ioh. 4. 3. Ioh. 4. Psal. 86: 11.

4. To have the loyns girt with truth Ephes. 6: v. 14.

5. To receive the love of the truth 1. Thes. 2: 10.

6. To be instructed of him, as the truth is in Iesus Ephes. 4: 21.

7. To purify the soul in obeying the truth: 1 Pet. 3: v. 22.

This shall suffice for clearing up and applying, in the generall, this excellent truth, That Christ is

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the Truth. We shall now come and make some more particular use of this precious point, by speaking to some particular cases (which we shall instance in, by which the understanding christian may be helped to understand how to carry and how to make use of Christ, in other, the like cases) wherein Christ is to be made use of, as *the Truth*; and show how believers are to make use of Him, in these cases, as *the Truth*.

C H A P. X I I I.

*How to make use of Christ, as the Truth,
for growth in knowledge.*

IT is a commanded duty, that we grow in the knowledge of Iesus Christ. 2 Pet. 3. last. And the knowledge of Him being life eternal Ioh. 17: 3. and our measure of knowledge of Him here being but imperfect, for we know but in part; it cannot but be an useful duty, and a desirable thing, to be growing in this knowledge. This is to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, to be increasing in the knowledge of God. Col. 1: 10. Knowledge must be added unto vertue; and it layeth a ground for other christian virtues 2 Pet. 1: 5, 6. In this knowledge, we must not be barren 2 Pet. 1: 8. And this being so necessary, so desirable, and so useful, and so advantageous a grace, the believer cannot but desire to have more and more of it. Especially seeing it is a part of the image of God Col. 3: vers. 10.

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Now, it is *the Truth* that must teach them here, first and last. The *light of the knowledge of the glory of God* must be had, in the face of *Jesus Christ* 2 Cor. 4: 6. The question therefore is, how we should make use of *Jesus Christ* for this end, that we may attaine to more of this excellent knowledge?

For clearing of this, I shall propose those distinctions.

First. It is good to live in the constant conviction of a necessity of his teaching us, and this taketh in those particulars,

1. That we should be conscious of our ignorance, even when we know most, or think we know most, remembring that the best knoweth but in part 1 Cor. 13: 9. The more true knowledge we attaine to, the more will we see and be convinced of our ignorance; because the more we know, the more will we discover of the vastnesse, and incomprehensibility of that object, which is proposed to our knowledge.

2. That we should remember, how deceitful our hearts are; and how ready they are to sit down upon a shadow of knowledge, even when we know nothing, as we ought to know. 1 Cor. 8. vers. 2. and this will keep us jealous, and watchful.

3. And to helpe forward our jealousie of our own hearts, and watchfulness, we would remember, that our hearts naturally are averse from any true and saving knowledge: whatever desire there be naturally after knowledge of hidden things, out of curiosity; and of things natural; or of things spiritual, as natural, for the perfection of nature,

as might be pretended, whereby in effect those that increase knowledge, increase sorrow *Eccles. 1: 18.* yet there is no inclination after spiritual and saving knowledge, in us naturally: But an averſation of heart therefrom.

4. That we should study and know the absolute necessity of this knowledge: how necessary it is for our christian communion with God, and christian walk with others; how necessary for our right improving of dispensations, general and particular; what a noble ornament of a christian it is, and a necessary piece of the image of God, which we have lost;

Secondly. Upon these grounds mentioned, we would also be convinced of this; That of ourselves, and by all our natural parts, endowments, quickness and sagacity, we cannot attaine to this saving knowledge; which is a special and saving grace, and so must be wrought in the soul, by a divine hand, even the mighty power of God. By our private study and reading, we may attaine to a literal, heady, and speculative knowledge, that will puff us up *1 Cor. 8: 1.* but thereby shall we never attain to this knowledge, which is spiritual, hearty, and practical, and so saving. We must have the anoynting here, which teacheth us all things, *1 John. 2: 27.* And of this we would be perswaded, that we may look to a higher hand, for light, and instruction.

Thirdly, There would be an eyeing of Christ's furniture and fittest, for this work of teaching of us. To wit,

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1. An eyeing of Him, as the *substantial wisdom* of the Father *Prov. 8.*

2. An eyeing of Him, as one *come out of the bosome of the Father* *John. 1: 18.* and so sufficiently enabled to acquaint us with the mysteries of God, for *salvation.*

3. An eyeing of Him, as *mediator*, fully *endued with all necessities* for this piece of his work, and so, having received the Spirit without measure, for this end *John. 3: 34.* and as having *hid in Him*, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge *Col. 2: 3.* and as having all fulnesse dwelling in Him *Col. 1: 19.* See also *Eesai. 11: 2, & 61: 1, 2.*

4. An eyeing of Him, as having power to send the Spirit, that anointing that teacheth us all things, and is truth and is no lie *1 John. 2: 20, 27.* not only by way of intercession and intreaty, begging it of the Father *John. 15: 16, 17.* But also authoritatively, as conjunct with the Father. The Father sendeth Him in Christ's name *John. 14: 26.* and Christ sendeth Him from the Father *John. 15: 26.* and this Spirit of truth, which guideth into all truth, shall receive of Christ's, & shew it unto us *John. 16: 13, 14, 15.*

Fourthly. There would be an eyeing of Christ's *readynesse, willingnesse and engadgment to helpe*, in this case: and this will encourage the soul to go forward: And for this cause we would remember those things.

1. That He standeth obliged to helpe us with instruction, by virtue of his office, as a *Prophet*, a *Witnessse*, a *Leader*, and a *Commander*, *Eesai. 55: vers. 4.*

2. That

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2. That He is *commissionated of the Father for this end*, and so is the Fathers servant; and is given for a light to the gentiles *Esaï. 42: 6. & 49: 6.* and the Father is said to speak by Him, or in Him *Heb. 1: 1.*

3. That He *received his gifts and qualifications for this end* and purpose, that He might give out and dispense to his members, according to their necessity: as is clear from *Psal. 68: 18.* compared with *Ephes. 4: 8.* what He is said to have *received*, in the one place, he is said to have *given*, in the other.

4. That He *hath begun this work already*, by his Spirit, in his followers; and therefore standeth engaged, to see it perfected: for all his works are perfect works.

5. That He *hath a love to his scholars*, and a desire to have them all thriveing, and making progresse in knowledge; this being his glory, who is their master and teacher.

6. That He *laid down wayes and meanes*, and a constant course, for instructing of his people: for.

(1.) He hath given his word, and setled and established ordinances, for this end.

(2.) He hath established a ministry for instructing his people *Ephes. 4: 8, 9, 10, 13.*

(3.) He hath gifted persons for this work of the ministry, *1 Cor. 12: 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.*

(4.) He backeth these officers, in the faithful administration of their function, and, through his blessing and Spirit, maketh their work prosperous and effectually, in his own, as He seeth fit,

Fifthly.

Fifely. There would be an eyeing of the promises of the covenant of grace, made for this end, whether general, or particular, or both. Such as those which we have *Eesai. 11: 9.* *Habbak. 2: 14.* The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord (or of the glory of the Lord) as the waters cover the sea: and that *Eesai. 32: 4.* the heart of the rash shall understand knowledge &c. and *Ier. 31: 34.* They shall all know me &c.

Sixtly. There would be a constant, diligent, serious and single using of the means of knowledge, with a faithfull dependence on Christ by faith, gripping to him, in his relations, offices, engagements and promises, and waiting upon his breathing, in hope and patience *Psal. 25: 5.*

Seventhly. There would be a guairding against every thing, that may obstruct this work, and grieve Him, in it: and therefore we would beware.

1. To undervalue and have a little esteem of knowledge: for this will grieve Him, and, to speak so, put him from work.

2. To misimprove any measure of knowledge, he giveth.

3. To weary of the meanes and ordinances, whereby He useth to convey knowledge in to the soul.

4. To limite the holy one of Israel to this, or that meane, to this or that time, or to this or that measure, who should have a latitude, as to all these.

5. To despise the day of small things, because we get not more.

6. To

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6. To be too curious in seeking after the knowledge of hidden mysteries, the knowledge whereof is not so necessary.

7. To leane too much unto, and to depend too much upon the ordinances or instruments, as if all, or any thing, could come from them.

Eightly There would be a right improving of any measure of knowledge we get, to his glory and to the edification of others, with humility & thankfulness, and so a putting of that talent in use, to gaine more to his glory; whatever measure of knowledge we get, we should in all haste, put it into practice; and set it to work: so shall it increase, and engadge Him to give more.

Ninthly. There would be a lying open to Christs instructions, and to the shincings of the Spirit of light and of truth, and a ready receiving of what measure He is pleased to grant or infuse: which includeth those duties.

1. A serious and earnest hungering and thirsting after more spiritual knowledge.

2. A diligent use of every approved meane for this end.

3. A going about the meanes with much self denyal, spirituality, singleness of heart and sincerity, looking to and depending upon Him, who must breath upon the meanes, and make them usefull.

4. A greedy receiving, drinkeing in, and treasuring up in the soul, what is gotten.

5. A guarding against Selfish and by ends, with a single eyeing of his glory.

6. A guarding against pride in the heart, and a
studying

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stuyting of humility and meeknesse: for the meek will He guide in judgement, and the meek will He teach his way Psal. 25: 9.

7. A putting of the heart, or understanding in his hand, together with the truth, that is heard and received, that He may write the truth in the heart, and cause the heart receive the impression of that truth.

Tenthly. There would be a rolling of the whole matter by faith on Him, as the only teacher, a putting of the ignorant, blockish, averse, and perverse heart, into his hand, that He may frame it to his own minde, and a leaving of it there, till He by his Spirit, write in it what He thinketh meet, to his own glory, and our good.

And sure, were this way followed, growth in knowledge would not be so rare a thing as it is,

Cautions.

For further direction and caution in this matter, the beleever would take notice of these particulars.

1. That he should not sit down upon any measure of knowledge he hath attained to, or can attain to here, as if he had enough, and should labour for no more: but he should still be mindeing his duty of seeking, and pressing for more.

2. Whenever he is about any mean of knowledge, such as preaching, reading, conference &c. his heart should be only upon Christ: He should be hanging on his lips for a word of instruction; and with greedinesse looking for a word from his mouth: he would be sending many postes to heaven,

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ven, many ejaculatory desires for light and understanding, and that with singlenesse and sincerity, and not for base ends, or out of hypocrisie.

3. Let him not think, that there is no growth in knowledge, because possibly he perceiveth it not, or is not satisfied, as to the measure thereof; yea though possibly he perceive more ignorance, than ever he did before: If he grow in the knowledge of his own ignorance, it is a growth of knowledge not to be despised: and in a manner, what can we else know of God, but that He far transcendeth all our knowledge, and that He is an incomprehensible one, in all his wayes?

4. Let him not think, that there is no growth in knowledge, because he perceiveth not a growth in the knowledge of such or such a particular, which he desireth most: for if there be a growth in the knowledge of other particulars, necessary to be known, there is no reason to compleane. If one grow not, as he supposeth, in the knowledge of God, and of the mysteries of the gospel; yea if he grow in the discovery of the treachery and wickednesse of his own heart, he cannot say, that he groweth not in knowledge.

5. Let him not measure his growth in knowledge, by his growth in the faculty of speaking and discoursing of such or such points of Religion: many measure their knowledge by their tongue, and think they know little because they can expresse little; and so they think they attaine to no increase or growth in knowledge, because they perceive no growth or increase in this faculty of discoursing, and talking of such or such points of truth. It is safer to measure their

their knowledge by the impression that the truth hath on their spirits, and the effects of it on all their carriage, than by their ability or skill to talk and disput of it.

6. Let them beware to imagine, that they shall be able to search out the almighty unto perfection, canst thou (said Zophar Job. 11: 7, 8, 9.) by searching find out God? canst thou finde out the almighty unto perfection? He is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper then hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. Or that they shall be able ever to win to the bottome of their own false deceitful heart, which, as Ieremiab sayeth Cap. 17: 9. is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? And which is God's prerogative alone to search and try. vers. 10. Neither let them think, so long as they are here, to win to an exact and perfect knowledge of the mysteries of God, wherein is the manifold wisdom of God. Ephes. 3: 10. which very Principalities and powers in heavenly places are learning; and which the Angels are poreing and looking into with desire 1. Pet. 1: 12. There is no perfection in knowledge to be had here: for here the best but knoweth in part, and Prophecyeth in part. 1 Cor. 13: 4.

7. Let them not think that every one shall have the same measure of knowledge: Every one hath not the like use for it, or the like capacity for it. There is a measure proportioned to every one. They should not then complean, because they have not such a measure of knowledge, as they perceive in some others. It may be, the Lord hath some harder

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harder piece of service, which calleth for more knowledge, to put others to. Let every one then minde his duty faithfully, and conscientiously, and let him not quarrel with God, that he attaineth not to such a measure of knowledge, as he seeth others attaine unto.

8. Neither let them think, that the same measure is required of all: for more is required of some, by reason of their office and charge, in the house of God, being called to teach and instruct others, than of others: and so more is required of such, as have larger capacities, and a better faculty of understanding than others, who naturally are but of a narrow reach, and of a shallow capacity: more also is required of such, as live under plaine, powerfull, and lively ordinances, and under a more powerful and spiritual dispensation. of the grace of God, than of others, that want such advantages. So likewise, more is required of old Christians, than of new beginners: Old men, of much and long experience, should know more, than such as are but babes in Christ, and of yesterday.

9. Let their desires run out after that knowledge, not which puffeth up; for there is a knowledge which puffeth up. 1 Cor. 8. 1. but which humbleth, and driveth the soul further from it self, and nearer to Christ.

10. They would carefully distinguish betwixt the gift of knowledge, and the grace of knowledge, That ordinarily puffeth up; This humbleth: That bringeth not the soul to Iesus; This doth: That is but a forme Rom. 2: 20. and doth not retain God Rom. 1: 23. This is a real thing, laying hold
on

on God, and holdeth him fast, having the feare of the Lord for its principle, for this *fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* Job. 28: 28. Psal. 111: 10. Prov. 1: 7. and 9: 10. That lyeth most in the head, and venteth most in discourses, words, yea and sometime evanisheth into vaine notions; But this goeth down to the heart, and lodgeth there, and appeareth in the mans walk & conversation: as these two would be distinguished, so the one should not be measured by the other.

11 When they do not profite indeed, let them beware of quarrelling with Christ, or of blameing Him, in any manner of way: but let them lay the blame of their shortcoming on themselves, for not making more use of Him, by faith and single dependence upon Him. It is true, none will be so bold, as in words to quarrell with or blame Him; yet the heart is deceitful, and tacitely may raise & foment such thoughts of Him, and his dispensations, as can passe under no other notion, than a quarrelling with Him. Now these would be guarded against.

12. Beware of urging for or expecting of immediat revelations, or extraordinary manifestations: for we should not tempt the Lord, nor set limites to Him, neither should we prescribe meanes and wayes to Him, we must be satisfied with the ordinary meanes, which He hath appointed, and waite at wisdomes doors, with our eares nailed to his posts.

13. Whatever point of truth they learne, or whatever measure of knowledge they get, they would do well to give that back againe to Christ,

238 How to make use of Christ, as Truth to keep for them, against a time of need; and waite on Him for grace to improve it for his glory.

14. Let them beware of mindeing things too high. *Psal.* 131:1. It is better to feare and stand in awe, and to seek to lay the foundations well, to get the saving knowledge of things necessary to salvation. This will yeeld most peace and satisfaction.

C H A P. XIV.

How to make use of Christ, as Truth, for comfort, when truth is oppress'd and borne down.

THere is another difficulty, wherein beleeving souls will stand in need of Christ, as *the Truth*, to helpe them; and that is, when his work is overturned, his cause borne down, truth condemned, and enemies, in their opposition to his work, prospering in all their wicked attempts. This is a very trying dispensation, as we see it was to the holy penman of *Psalme* 73. for it made him to stagger, so that his feet were almost gone, and his steps had well nigh slipt: yea he was almost repenting of his being a godly person, saying *vers.* 13. *vervly I have claus'd my heart in vaine, & washed my hands in innocencie.* It was something like this, which made *Ieremie* say *Cap.* 8:18. *when I would comfort my self against sorrow, my heart is faint in me. The harvest was past, and the summer was ended, and yet they were not saved. vers.* 20. *and they looked for peace, but no good*

good came, and for a time of health, but behold trouble vers. 15. and this was fainting and vexatious. And what made Baruch, Jeremiah's faith full companion in tribulation, say, *woe is me now; for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow. I fainted in my sighing, and I finde no rest.* Jer. 45: 3. but this, that all things were turning upside down. God was breaking down that, which he had built; and plucking up that; which he had planted. Tribulation and suffering for a good cause, is even fainting to some; as the Apostle hinteth Ephes. 3: 13. when he sayes, *wherefore I desire that yee fainte not, at my tribulation for you.* And that which evinceth the danger of this dispensation, is the fainting and backsliding of many, in such a time of tryal, as sad experience too often cleareth.

Now the beleivers stay in this case, must be the rock of ages, Jesus, *the Truth*. It is He alone, who can keep streight and honest, in such a reeling time. So that a sight of Christ, as *the Truth*, in reference to the carrying on of Truth in the earth, and throughing his cause and work, will be the only support of a soul, shaken by such a piece of tryal.

But the question is, How should Beleivers make use of Christ, in such a time, to the end they may be kept from fainting and succumbing in such a storme? To which I answer. That the faith and consideration of those particulars would helpe to establishment.

1. That Christ, in all this great work of redemption, and in every piece of it, is the Fathers servant. So is He frequently called, *his servant* Esai.

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42: 1. & 49: 3, 5, 6. & 52: 13. & 53: 11. *Zech.* 3: 2. & therefore this work is a work intrusted to Him, & He standeth engaged as a servant, to be faithful to his trust. Moreover adde to this, that He hath a commission to perfect that work; and we need no doubt, but He, who is *the Truth*, will be true to his trust. *Him hath God the Father sealed* *Iohn.* 6: 27. & He oft tells us himself, that He is *sent of the Father* *Iohn.* 4: 34. & 5: 23, 24, 30, 36, 37. & 6: 38: 39. 40, 44, 57. & 8: 16, 18. & 12: 44, 45, 49. & 7: 16. & 9: 4. & 10: 36. & 11: 42.

2. That while He was upon the earth, He finished that work, that was committed to Him to finish here, having purchased all that was to be bought by his blood, paying all the price that justice did ask *Iohn.* 17: 4. & 19: 30. By which price he hath purchased a people to himself *Revel.* 5: 9. *Luk.* 1: 68. So that His work, cause, and interest is a purchased work, bought with his blood.

3. That his resurrection and glorification is an undoubted proof of this, that justice is satisfied, and that the price is fully payed; and also that his exaltation at the Fathers right hand is a sure evidence & ground of hope, that He shall at last triumphe over all his enemies; and that his work of truth shall prosper. The Father said to Him *Psal.* 110: 1. *Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies, thy foot stool.* Being now highly exalted, he hath got a name above every name, that in his name every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confesse, that *Iesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11.

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4. That the Father standeth engaged to make good to Him, all that was promised, and to give Him all that He purchased. *Isa. 53: 10, 11, 12.* Christ, having now fulfilled his undertaking, by making his soul an offering for sin, and so satisfying justice, which is openly declared by his resurrection, admission to glory, as the Head of his elect, is to expect the accomplishment of what was conditioned unto Him. His work therefore on the earth must prosper: and the Father hath undertaken to see it prosper. Sure the faith of his would much support a poor soul, staggering at the thoughts of the prosperity of the wicked, and of their evil cause.

5. That Christ himself is now thoroughly furnished and enabled, for the carrying on of his work, over the belly of all adversaries, for all power in heaven and earth is given to Him. *Matth. 28: 18.* and every knee must bow to Him. *Phil. 2: 10.* all judgment is committed unto Him. *Job. 31: 22, 27.* Angels, powers and authorities are made subject unto Him. *1 Pet. 3: 22.* Yea all things are under Him. *Ephes. 1: 22.* How then can his work miscarry? or who can hinder, that truth should not flourish in the earth?

6. That Christ is actually at work, imploying this power for the carrying forward of his designs, for the glory of the Father, and for his own glory, and for the good of his poor people. The Father worketh by Him, and He by the Spirit, which is his great vicegerent, sent from the Father, and from Him, and his work is to glorify the Son, and shall receive of his, and show it unto us. *John 16: 14.*

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42: 1. & 49: 3, 5, 6. & 52: 13. & 53: 11. *Zech.* 3: 8. & therefore this work is a work intrusted to Him, & He standeth engaged as a servant, to be faithful to his trust. Moreover adde to this, that He hath a commission to perfect that work; and we need not doubt, but He, who is *the Truth*, will be true to his trust. *Him hath God the Father sealed* *Iohn.* 6: 27. & He oft tells us himself, that He is sent of the Father *Iohn.* 4: 34. & 5: 23, 24, 30, 36, 37. & 6: 38: 39. 40, 44, 57. & 8: 16, 18. & 12: 44, 45, 49. & 7: 16. & 9: 4. & 10: 36. & 11: 42.

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1. That

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4. That the Father standeth engaged to make good to Him, all that was promised, and to give Him all that He purchased. *E/4. 53: 10, 11, 12.* Christ, having now fulfilled his undertaking, by making his soul an offering for sin, and so satisfying justice, which is openly declared by his resurrection, admission to glory, as the Head of his elect, is to expect the accomplishment of what was conditioned unto Him. His work therefore on the earth must prosper: and the Father hath undertaken to see it prosper. Sure the faith of his would much support a poor soul, staggering at the thoughts of the prosperity of the wicked, and of their evil cause.

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6. That Christ is actually at work, employing this power for the carrying forward of his designs, for the glory of the Father, and for his own glory, and for the good of his poor people. The Father worketh by Him, and He by the Spirit, which is his great vicegerent, sent from the Father, and from Him, and his work is to glorify the Son, and shall receive of his, and show it unto us. *Ioh. 16: 14.*

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7. That Christ, upon many accounts, standeth engaged to perfect this work, which He hath begun and is about. His honour is engaged to go thorow, seing now He is fully furnished for it, and hath all the creation at his command. He must then perfect his work, as to the application, as well as He did perfect it, as to the purchase. His love to his Father & his own glory, & to his own peoples good and salvation may assure us, that He will not leave the work unperfected; and his power and furniture may give us full security, that no stop, which his work meeteth with, shall be able to hinder it.

8. That hence it is clear and manifest, that his wheel is in the midst of the wheels of men, and that therefore He is ordering all their motions and reelings to the best. His wheel keepeth an even pace and moveth equally & equably, in the midst of mens contrary motions.

9. And that therefore, all the eccentric and irregular motions of devils and wicked men, being in His hand, and ordered by Him, cannot hinder but further His end; So that even enemies, while opposing and seeking to destroy the cause and interest of Christ, that his name and truth should no more be mentioned, are promoting his work. His wheel is the great wheel that ordereth all the lesser and subordinate wheels, whatever contrary motions they may have the one to the other, and all or many of them may seem to have to this great wheel. So that, do they what they will, the work of our Lord goeth on. Their opposition is setting his work forward, though they intend the contrary. How-

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ever their faces look, they row to the port, He would be at. This is an undoubted truth, and confirmed in all ages, and yet is not firmly beleev- ed: and a truth it is, which, if beleevd, would do much to settle our staggering souls in a stormy day.

10. That at last, He shall come to be glorified in his saints 2 Theſ. 1: 10. when He shall be revealed from heaven with all his mighty angels verſ. 7. Then shall it be seen, whose shall counsel stand His or mens; and whose work shall prosper, His or Satans.

Cautions.

Yet let me adde a few words, for caution and direction here.

1. The consideration of those things mentioned should not make us slacken our diligence in prayer, and other duties: and when they are a right considered, they will rather prove a spurre and a goad in our side, to set us forward, than a bridle to hold us aback.

2. We would not think, that Christ's work and interest is going backward alwayes, when it seemeth so to us. Even when He is casting downe, what He hath built up; and plucking up, what He hath planted, his work is prospering, for all that is in order to the laying of a better foundation, and to the carrying on of a more glorious work, when He shall lay all the stones with faire colours, & the foundations with sapphires, and make the windowes of crystal &c. Esai. 54: 11, 12.

3. Though his work be alwayes going on, and

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his truth prospering; yet we would not think that it will alwayes prosper alike, in our apprehensions; many times we judge by rules of our own making, and not by the rule of truth; and hence it is that we mistake oftentimes. We walk little by faith, and too much by sense; and hence we judge too much by sense, and so passe a wrong judgement, to his dishonour, and the sadning of our own hearts.

4. Nor would we think, that His Truth and interest is ruined and gone, because it is sore oppressed, in this or that particular place of the world; as if his work were not of an universalex-
tent, and in all the churches. If his truth thrive and prosper in some other place of the world, shall we not say, that his kingdom is coming? Or shall we limite all his work and interest to one small part of the world?

5. We would not think the worse of his work, because it is carried on with so many stops, and doth meet with so many Impediments in its way: We are not acquainted with the depths of his infinite wisdom and counsel; and so we see not what noble ends He hath before Him, in suffering those impediments to lie in the way of his chariot. We think He should ride so triumphantly all alongs, that none should once dar to cast the least block in his way; but we judge carnally, as unacquainted with the many noble and glorious designs, which He hath, in ordering matters. As Himself was for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence; so will he have the way of the carrying on of his work prove, in his holy and spotlesse justice, a stumbling stone to many, that shall stumble thereat, and fall, and never rise any more.

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6. We would beware to think, that Christ hath forgotten his work, because He seemeth to take no notice of our prayers, which we are putting up now and then for his work. He may be doing that, which we are desiring, in the general, and yet not let us know, that He is answering our prayers: & that for wise and holy ends, to keep us humble & diligent. He may seem to misregard our suites, and yet be carrying on his work, and granting us our desires, upon the matter.

7. Hence we should beware of desponding, and growing heartlesse and faine, when we see few owning truth, Or standing upon Christ's side; for He needeth not mans help, to carry on his work, though He sometimes thinketh good to condescend so far, as to honour some to be instrument, in setting of it forward, who yet have nothing but as He giveth; let us not then think, that his work cannot prosper, because great ones and meaner ones oppose it, and such as should stand for it, and owne it, are few and fainting, without strength, courage or Zeal.

C H A P. XV.

*How to make use of Christ for stedfastness,
in a time, when truth is oppressed,
and borne downe.*

WHen enemies are prevailing, and the way of truth is evil spoken of, many faine and many turne aside, and do not plead for truth, nor stand

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up for the interest of Christ, in their houre and power of darknesse; many are overcome with base feare, and either side with the workers of iniquity, or are not valiant for the truth, But being faint-hearted turne back. Now the thoughts of this may put some, who desire to stand fast, and to owne Him and his cause, in a day of tryall, to enquire how they shall make use of Christ, who is *the Truth*, so as to be enabled to stand in the day of temptation, and to keep fast by *Truth*, when it is loaded with reproaches, and buried under an hape of obloquy. For satisfaction to this question, I shall shortly point out those directions, which, if followed, may prove helpful to keep the soul from fainting, misbelieving, doubting, quarrelling at the Lord's dispensations, and from yeelding to the temptations, in such a day.

1. The beleever would live in the conviction of his hazard, through the sight of Satan, the strength of the temptation, the wickednesse and treachery of the heart, the evil example of others, and the want of sanctified courage, Zeal and resolution; and this will keep the soul humble, and farr from boasting of its own strength, which was *Peter's* fault.

2. They would live in the faith and perswasion of this, That it is Christ alone, who is *the Truth*, who can help them to stand for truth, in a day of temptation; and that all their former purposes, voves, resolutions; solemne professions, and the like, will prove but weak cables to hold them fast, in a day of storme; and that only the rock of ages must save them; and their being a leyward of Him, and partaking of his warme and saife protection, will

will do their businesse. That all their stock of grace, and knowledge, and that confirmed with resolutions and sincere purposes, will helpe but little in that day: and that new influences of grace and truth, from the fountaine, that is full of grace and truth, will only prove establishing to the soul, and confirme it in the truth, in that day.

3. Therefore, they would eye Christ in his Offices; particularly as the great Prophet, who can teach, as never man taught; so teach, as to make the soul receive the doctrine, and to hold it fast, to receive it in love, and lay it up in the heart, as a rich and enriching treasure.

4. They would eye him, in his relations unto his people, as their Head, Husband, Brother, Leader, Commander, Captaine, &c. for those give ground of approaching unto Him, with confidence, in the day of darknesse and mists, for light and direction, and for strength and courage, in the day of temptation: and give ground of hope of helpe, in that day of tryal and difficulty.

5. They would eye and act faith, upon the promises of assistance and through-bearing, in the day of calamity; such as those, *Esa. 43: 2.* when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kinde upon thee. And *Esa. 41: 13.* for I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, feare not, I will helpe thee: and particularly, they would eye the promises of light, in the day of darknesse. See *Esa. 8: 18, 19. & 60: 1. 2 Sam. 13: 29.*

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6. They would look on Christ as an exalted conquerour, now risen and glorified: as a victorious captaine, that hath fought and overcome; that they, as his followers, may be made partakers of his victory and conquest, and so reape the fruit of his resurrection and ascension, in their establishment in the truth, when it is borne down, and questioned, yea and condemned by men. He abode stedfast and unmoveable in the midst of all the stormes, that blew in his face: and as He came to bear witness to the truth; so did He faithfully and zealously avow truth, even to the death; and in death got the victory of the Arch-liar and deceiver. Now the beleever would eye this, for the strengthening of his faith and hope of victory also, through Him: and therefore would waite patiently for his help; and not make haste: for *they who beleeve make not haste* Esa. 28: 16. knowing that He is true and faithfull and will not disappoint his followers, that trust in Him. And moreover, it would be of advantage to them, in this case, to eye that gracious and comfortable word John. 14: 19 — *because I live, you shall live also*: and so by faith conclude, that seeing Christ now liveth, as a conquerour over darknesse, untruth, reproaches, calumnies, and opposition of liars, yea of the father of lies; they, through Him, shall also live, and ride out that storme: and this will give much courage to the soul, to endure temptation, and to waite in patience for an outgate.

7. They would study much, and suck at the grand promise of his coming againe, and of finally dispelling all clouds: and of fully clearing up his

his glorious truths, that are now covered over with obloquie, and buryed under reproaches: and this will encourage the soul to stand to truth, in the midst of all opposition, beleeving that, at length, truth, how much soever opposed now, shall be victorious.

8. They should be single in their dependence on Him, for strength and throwbearing, in that day of tryal; not leaning to their own understanding; but acknowledging Him in all their wayes Prov. 3: 6. and when they see no hope of outgate in the world, nor appearance of the clearing up of the day, they would comfort themselves, and encourage themselves in the Lord, as David did, in a great strait 1 Sam. 30: 6.

9. Upon the forementioned grounds, they would cast all the care of their throwbearing on Him, who careth for them. 1 Pet. 5: 7. rolling all their difficulties on Him, consulting only with Him, & his Word, and not with flesh and blood; and so they would commit their wayes to Him, who disposeth of all things, as He seeth good; forbearing to limite the holy one of Israel, or to quarrel with Him for any thing he doth; and patiently wait for his out-gate, and delivery.

10. It were good, in this time of tryal, to be remembring the worth of truth, and intertaining high thoughts of the smallest piece of truth, that is questioned, for his sake, who is the Truth: that a sight of the glorious worth thereof, may make them account the lesse of all they can lose, in the defence and maintenance thereof.

11. So were it good at this time, when truches

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come to be questioned, to be lying neare to the Truth, for light, and to be keeping fast, what He by his Spirit cleareth up to be truth, though the light should not be so full, as to dispel all objections. This were to depend upon Him for light, with singlenesse of heart; and in godly simplicity and sincerity to follow his direction and torch, though it should not shine so bright, as they would wish.

Cautions.

A few words of caution will be usefull here also: as

1. The beleever, though taking this course, would not think to be altogether free of fear of stepping aside, in lesse or in more: God may think good, to let much of this abide, to the end he may be kept watchfull, tender and diligent; for fear maketh the soul circumspect and watchfull; and this is a good preservative from defection.

2. Nor would the beleever think, that hereby he shall be kept altogether free of fainting. The heart now and then, through fear and misbeleef, may fall into a fit of fainting, and think all is gone; and yet He may carry poor souls thorow, and make his strength perfect in their weaknesse 2 Cor. 12: 9. That when they are supported and carryed through the temptation, they may sing praise to Him; and not ascribe any thing to themselves: remembring how often they were fainting, and almost giving over the cause, as desperate and hopelesse.

3. They would not think it strange, if in the time of their wrestling with difficultyes, the Lord
hide

hide his face from them, and give them not that which they desire. He who is in prayer, and sometimes they have men with us, for the Lord may see it, but put them to his point of tryall, among the rest, to see if the love of his glory and truth will keep them standing, when they want the encouragements, that might be expected in that way: and if pure conscience to the command and authority of God will keep from siding with an evil way, when the soul is destitute of all sensible encouragement, both from within and from without.

4. In all this business, believers would carry singly, with an eye to God's glory; and would not be acted with self-ends, or drawn by carnal and selfy motives. They would not desire stability and through bearing, to be seen of men, or to gain applause and the praise of Men, lest God be provoked to leave them to themselves, and they at length come off with discredit, as Peter did. Therefore they would strive against these carnal motions of the heart; and labour for spirituality, singleness of heart, and truth in the inward parts, which the Lord desireth. Psal. 51:6.

CHAPTER XVII.

How to make use of Christ as the Truth, when error prevaleth, and the spirit of error carryeth many away.

T Here is a time, when the Spirit of error is going abroad; and truth is questioned, and
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many are led away with delusions, for Satan can change himself into an angel of light, and make many great and faire-like pretensions to holiness, and under that pretext usher in untruthes, and gaine the consent of many unto them; so that, in such a time of temptation, many are stollen off their feet, and made to depart from the right wayes of God, and to imbrace error and delusions, in stead of truth. Now the question is, how a poor beleever shall make use of Christ, who is *the Truth*, for keeping him stedfast in the truth, in such a day of tryal, and from imbracing the way of error, how plausible soever it may appeare: for satisfaction to this, we shall propose those few things.

1. In such a time, when a Spirit of error is let loose and rageth, and carrieth severall away, it were good for all, who would be kept straight & honest, to be walking in feare. It is not good to despise such a slye and subtil enemy, especially in the houre and power of darknesse. Then all are called to be on their guaird, and to stand upon their watch-toure, and to be jealous of their corrupt hearts, that are ready enough, of their own accord, to drink in errour, and to receive the temptation, at any time, and much more then.

2. They would not think, that their knowledge, and ability to dispute for truth, will keep them stedfast, if there be not more: for if the temptation grow, they may come to reasone and dispute themselves out of all their former knowledge and skill. The father of lies is a cunning sophister, and knoweth how to shake their grounds, and call all

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3. They would renew their covenant grips of Christ, and make sure that maine businesse, viz. their peace and union with God in Christ, and their accepting of Christ for their Head and Husband. They would labour to have the foundation sure, and to be united unto the chief corner stone; that so, blow the storme as it will, they may ride safely; and that hereby they may have access to Christ with boldnesse, in their difficulty; and may with confidence seek light from Him, in the house of darknesse.

4. To the end they may be kept more watchfull, and circumspect, they would remember, that it is a dishonourable thing to Christ, for them to step aside, in the least matter of truth; the denying of the least point of truth, is a consequential denying of him, who is *the Truth*: and to lose a foot in the matters of truth, is very dangerous, for who can tell when they, who once slip a foot, shall recover it againe? And who can tell how many, and how dreadful errors, they may drink in, who have once opened the door to a small error? Therefore they would beware of tampering in this matter, and to admit any error, upon the account that it is a small and inconsiderable one: there may be an unseen concatenation betwixt one error and another, and betwixt a small one and a greater one, so as if the little one be admitted and received, the greater shall follow, and it may be feared that if they once dally with error, and make a gape in their consciences, that God give them up to iudiciall blindness, that, ere all be done, they shall imbra-

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ce that opinion, which sometime they seemed to hate as death.

5. They would eye the promises suteing that ease: viz. the promises of Gods. *Guideing the blind by a way, which they know not: of making idles knesse light be ore them, and crooked things streight.* Esa. 42: 16. and of *guideing continually* Esa. 58: 11. see also Esa. 49: 10. and 57: 18. and they would act faith on these and the like promises, as now made sure through Jesus.

6. Particularly, they would fix their eye upon that principal promise, of the *Spirit of truth to guide into all truth* Iohn 16: 13.

7. With singlenesse of heart, they would depend on Christ, and waite for light from Him, and beware of prejudice at the truth: with singlenesse of heart, they would lye open to his instructions, and to the influences of his light and direction, and receive in the beames of his divine light: and thus go about duties viz. Prayer, Conference, Preaching, Reading &c. with an eye fixed on him, and with a soul open to Him, & free of all unful preingadgment, and love to errour.

8. With singlenesse of heart, they would give up their souls to Christ, as the Truth, that He would write the truth in their souls, and frame their souls unto the truth, and unto that truth, which is most questioned, and by which they are most in hazard to be drawn away; and urge and ptesse Him by prayer and supplication, to do the duty of an Head, an Husband, guide and Commander &c. unto them; and that He would be a light unto them, in that day.

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day of darkness, and not suffer them to dishonour Him, or prove scandalous to others; by departing from the truth, and embracing of error. A serious single-hearted dealing with Him, upon the grounds of the covenant promises, and his relations and engagements, might prove steadable in this case, if accompanied with a lying open to the influences of truth, and to the light of information, which He is pleased to send by the Spirit of truth.

Cautions and Directions.

For further clearing of this matter, we shall hint at some cautions, and further directions useful here: such as

1. They would beware of thinking that God should come to them with light and instruction, in an extraordinary manner; and reveal the truth of the question controverted somewhat immediately: for this were a manifest tempting and limiting of the holy one of Israel. We must be satisfied with the meanes of instruction, which he hath provided, and run to the *Law* and to the *Testimony*. We have the *Scriptures*, which are able to make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished into all good works 2. Tim. 3: 16, 17. and to make wise unto Salvation vers. 15. There must we seek light; and there must we waite for the breathing of his Spirit with life, and coming with light to cleare up truth to us: for they are the *Scriptures* of truth. Dan. 10: 21. and the *law* of the Lord, which is perfect, converting the soul, and the commandment of the Lord, that is pure enlightening the eyes &c. Psal. 119: 7, 8. We have the *Ministry*,

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stery, which God hath also appointed for this end; to make known to us his minde: there must we waite for him and his light. Thus must we waite at the posts of wisdomes doors: and waite for the king of light, in his own way, wherein He hath appointed us to waite for Him. And if He think good to come another way, more immediat, Let Him alwayes be welcome: but let not us limite Him, nor prescribe wayes to Him; but follow his directions.

2. When any thing is borne-in upon their Spirit, as a truth to be received, or as an errour to be rejected, more immediatly, they would beware of admitting of every such thing, without tryal and examination: for we are expressly forbidden to beleeve every Spirit, and commanded to try them, whether they are of God or not 1 *Iohn*. 4: 1. The Lord will not take it ill, that even his own immediat motions and revelations be tryed and examined by the word; because the word is given us for this end, to be our teste and standart of truth. The way of immediat revelation is not the ordinary way now of God's manifesting his minde to his people. He hath now chosen another way, and given us a more sure word of prophetic, than was even a voice from heaven, as Peter sayeth 2 *Pet*. 1: 18, 19. It is commended in the *Bereans Act*. 17: 11. who upon this account were more noble, then those of *Thessalonica*, in that they received the word with all readinesse of minde, & searched the scriptures dayly, whether those things were so. Even Pauls words, though he was an authorized, & infallible Apostle of Christ's, are here put to the touch stone of the word.

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words Many false Prophets may go out, and deceive many; and speak great swelling words of vanity. 1 John 4: 1. 2 Pet. 2: 18. and the devil can transchange himself into an angel of light. 2 Cor. 11: 14. And though an Angel out of heaven should preach any other thing, than what is in the written word, we ought not to receive his doctrine, but to reject it, and to account him accursed Gal. 1: 8. So that the written word must be much studied by us; and by it must we try all motions, all doctrines, all inspirations, all revelations, and all manifestations.

3. Much more would they beware of thinking, that the dictates of their conscience obligeth them, so as that alwayes they must of necessity follow the same. Conscience, being God's deputy in the soul, is to be followed no further, than it speaketh for God, and according to truth. An erring conscience, though it binde so far, as that he who doth contrary to the dictates thereof sinneth against God, in that knowing no other than that the dictates of conscience are right and consonant to the minde of God; yet dar counteract the same, and thus formally rebel against Gods authoritie; yet it doth not oblige us to beleeve and to do, what it asserteth to be truth, and duty. It will not then be enough for them to say, my conscience, and the light within me speaketh so, and instructeth me so: for that light may be darknesse, and error and a delusion; and so no rule for them to walk by. *To the law and to the testimony:* and, if their conscience, minde, or light within them, *speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them* Esai. 8: 20. I

grant;

grant, as I said, they can not without sin, counter-act the dictates even of an erring conscience, because they know not better, but that these dictates are according to truth: and thus an erring conscience is a most dangerous thing, and bringeth people under a very sad *dilemma*, that whether they follow it or not, they sin: and there is no other remedie here, but to lay by the erring conscience, and get a conscience rightly informed by the word: putting it in Christ's hand; to be better formed and informed; that so it may do its office better. This then would be especially guarded against; for if once they lay downe this for a principle, that whatever their conscience and mind or inward light (as some will it) dictate, must be followed, there is no delusion; how false, how abominable so ever it be, but they may be at length in hazard to be drawn away with: and so the rule, that they will walk by, be nothing in effect but the Spirit of lies and of delusion; and the motions and dictates of him, who is the Father of lies, that is, the Devil.

4. Such as pretend so much to walk by conscience, would take heed, that they take not that for the dictate of conscience, which really is but the dictate of their own humors, inclinations, pre-occupied mindes, and byassed wills. When conscience speaketh, it groundeth on the authority of God, whether truly or falsely, and proposeth such a thing, to be done, or to be refrained from, meetly because God commandeth that, and forbidderh this, though sometimes it mistaketh: but, though the dictates of mens humors, inclinations, pre-occupied judgements and wills, may pretend God's authority,

authority, for what they say, yet really some carnal respect, selfish end, and the like, lyeth at the bottom; and is the chiefe spring of that motion: and also the dictates of humor, and byassed willes are usually more violent and fierce, then the dictates of conscience; for wanting the authority of God to back their assertions and prescriptions, they must make up that with an addition of a preternatural force and strength. Hence such as are purely led by conscience, are pliable, humble, and ready to heare and receive information; whereas others are headstrong, and pertinacious, unwilling to receive instruction, or to heare any thing contrary to their mindes, lest their conscience, receiving more light, speak with a higher voyce, against their inclinations; and former wayes; and so create more trouble to them; whileas now they enjoy more quiet within, so long as the cry of their self-will & byassed judgment is so loud, that they can not well hear the still and low voyce of conscience.

5. They would labour for much selfdenyal, and sincerity; and to be free from the snares and power of selfish ends, as credite, a name, and applause, or what of that kinde, that may be like the fear of man, that bringeth a snare: Prov. 29: 25. for that will be like a gift, that blindeth the eyes of the wise. Exod. 23: 8. love to carry on a party, or a designe, to be seen and accounted some body, to maintaine their credite and reputation, lest they be accounted changelings, and the like, will prove very dangerous in this case: for these may forcibly carry the soul away, to imbrace one errour after another, and one errour to strengthen and

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and confirme another, that it is hard to know, where or when they shall stand; and these by-respects may so forcibly drive the soul forward, that he shall neither heare the voice of conscience within, nor any instruction from without.

6. They would study the word of truth, without prejudice and any sinfull preingadgment, lest they be made thereby to wiredraw and wrest the word, to their own destruction; as some, of whom *Peter* speaketh *2 Pet. 3: 16*. It is a dangerous thing, to study the word with a prejudicat opinion; and to bow or wiredraw the word, and make it speak what we would have it speak, for the confirmation of our opinions and sentiments; for that is but to mock God and his law; and to say, Let his law speak what it will, I will maintaine this opinion; and so make the word speak, as we would have it, or else lay it by. This is to walk by some other rule, than the word; and to make the word serve our lusts, and confirme our errors, than which a greater indignitie can not be done to the Spirit of truth, speaking in the word.

7. In reading and studying of the word, there would be much single dependance on the Spirit for light: waiting for cleareness from Him, whom Christ hath promised to lead us into all truth. An earnest wrestling with Him for his assistance, enlightening the minde with divine light, to understand the truth, and inclineing the soul to a ready imbraceing and receiveing of the truth, declared in the word.

8. Though one place of scripture be enough to confirme any point of truth, and ground sufficient for us to beleve what is there said, there being nothing

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nothing in scripture, but what is truth: yet in such a time of abounding errors, and when many are going abroad, speaking perverse things, to lead the simple away, it were spiritual wisdom to be comparing scripture with scripture; and not to be lightly embracing whatever may seem probable, and fairly deduceable from some one passage or other of scripture; but to be comparing that with other passages, and see what concord there is: for this is certane, what ever point contradicteth other clear and manifest testimonies of scripture cannot be true; how ever a cunning sophister may make it seem very probably to flow out of such or such a passage of scripture. The testimony of the Spirit is uniforme, and free from all contradictions: and therefore we must see, if such an assertion, that some would draw from such a passage, agree with other plaine passage: and if not, be sure, that that is not the meaning of the place. When the devil did wrestle and abuse that passage of truth *Psal. 91: 11. He shall give his angels charge concerning thee. &c.* and from thence would inferre, that Christ might cast himself down. *Mat. 4: 6.* Christ shew that this inference was bad, because it did not agree with other divine testimonies, particularly not with that *Deut. 6: 16. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God:* And thereby he teacheth us to take this course, in times of temptation? and so compare spirituall things with spirituall, as Paul speaketh, *1. Cor. 2: 13.* Especially they would beware of expounding clear Scriptures by such as are more dark and mysterious: See *2. Pet. 3: 16.* it is al-
ways,

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wayes saifer, to explaine darker passages by such as are more clear.

9. Let them guaird against an humore of new-fanglednesse, nauseating old and solide truthes, and seeking after something new, having eares itching after new doctrines, yea or new modes and dresse of old truthes: for this is provocking to God, and proveth dangerous; for such *turne away their eares from the truth, and are turned into fables, as Paul telleth us. 2. Tim. 4: 3. 4. for the tme will come, sayeth he, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their owne lusts, shall they heape to themselves teachers, having itching eares: and they shall turne away their eares from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* This savoureth of a spirit of levity and inconstancy; which is dangerous.

10. They would labour to have no prejudice at the truth, but receive it in love, and the love of it: lest for that cause God give them up to strong delusions to beleeve lies, and to be led away with the deceiveablenesse of unrighteousnesse: as we see 2. Thes. 2: 10, 11, 12. *and with all deceivablenesse of unrighteousnesse in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved: and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should beleeve a lie; that they all might be damned, who beleeved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousnesse.*

11. So would they beware of stifling the truth, of making it a prisoner, & detaineing it in unrighteousnesse, like those spoken of Rom. 1: 18.

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for which cause God gave them up to uncleanness and to vile affections, and they became vaine in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened; yea professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. vers. 21, 22, 24, 26. They should let truth have free liberty, and power in the soul; and should yeeld up themselves to be ruled and guided by it: and not torture with it, lay chaine upon it, or fetter it, and keep it as a prisoner, that can do nothing.

2. For this cause, they would hold fast the truth, which they have learned, and have been taught by the Spirit out of the word. When Paul would guard and fortifie Timothy against seducers, that creept into houses, leading captive silly women &c. among other directions, he giveth him this 2. Tim. 3: 14, 15. But continue thou in the things, which thou hast learned, and hast bin assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise to Salvation &c. So he would have the Colossians walking in Christ, rooted and build up in Him, & stablished in the faith, as they had been taught Col. 2. 6, 7.

13. Especially they would be holding the ground-work fast, faith in Christ: It were good, in such a time oferring from the way of truth, to be griping Christ faster, and cleaving to Him by faith, and living by faith in Him. This is to hold the foundation fast; and then let the tempest of error blow as it will, they will ride at a sure anchor, and be safe, because fixed upon the rock of ages: and further, living neare Christ, in such a
dan

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dangerous day, would be a noble preservative from the infections of error. The soul that is dwelling in Christ, and griping to Him dayly by faith, and acting love on Him, dwelleth in light, and will discover error, sooner than another, because living under the rayes of the sun of righteousness; which discovereth error.

14. They would labour to learne the truth, as it is in *Iesus*; and the truthes, which they have heard of Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Him, will abide, when other truthes, that have been learnt but of men, and heard of men, and as it was in the preaching of men, and in books, shall soon vanish, in a day of trial. This is to learne Christ, as the Apostle speaketh *Ephes. 4: 20, 21*. *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Iesus*. When we learne the truth, as it is in *Iesus*, it bringeth us alwayes in to Him, and hath a tendency to fixe our hearts on Him, and is a piece of the bond that bindeth us to him and his way: we receive it then as a piece of his doctrine, which we must owne, and stand unto; O if we learned all our divinity thus! we would be more constant and stedfast in it, then we are.

15. When controversies arise, and they know not which side to choise; both seemeth to them to be alike well founded on the word, they would exerce their spiritual sagacity, and set their gift of discerning a work, to see which of the two tendeth most to promove piety and godlinesse, and the kingdome of Christ: and so see which of the two is the

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The truth, which is after godlinesse, as the Apostle speaketh Tit. 1: 1. they must look which of the two is the doctrine, which is according to Godlines. 1 Tim. 6: vers. 3. That is the truth which is Christ's, and which should be owned and imbraced, viz, which floweth from a Spirit of godlinesse, & tendeth to promote godlinesse, and matcheth with the true principles of godlinesse, even gospel godlinesse, wrought according to the tenor of the covenant of grace; that is, by the strength of the Spirit of Jesus, dwelling and working in us; and not according to the tenor of the covenant of works, that is, wrought by our own strength &c.

16. Yet withal, they would take heed, that they mistake not here: for they may look upon some wayes and doctrines, as having a greater tendency to promote godlinesse, then others; which indeed have not, but only seem so. They would therefore consider well, what is the way of godlinesse laid down in the noble device of the gospel, which is the way that only glorifyeth God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and see what suiteth most with that, according to the word; and not what seemeth most suitable to godlinesse in their apprehension. The word is the best judge and teste of true godlinesse; and in the word, we have the only safest meane of true godlinesse held forth: therefore we should see, what doctrine tendeth most to promote godlinesse, according to the way held forth in the word, and choose that.

17. They would guard against pride and self-conceite, as thinking they are wise enough, and understanding enough, in those matters: and so

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need not take a lesson of any. This may be of great prejudice, for it is *the meek*, that God guides by judgment. And to *the meek* will He teach his way *Psal. 25: 9*. Therefore it were good for his people in such a day, to be meek and humble, willing & ready to learne of any person, how meane so ever, that can teach the wayes of God. The Lord may bleis a word spoken by a private person, when he will not bleis the word spoken by a Minister: for his blessings are free. And it is not good to despise any meane: *Apollos*, though instructed in the way of the Lord, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in Spirit, and teaching diligently the things of the Lord *Act. 18: 24, 25*. Yet was content to learne of *Aquila* & of his wife *Priscilla*, when they expounded unto Him the way of God more perfectly *vers. 26*.

18. In such a time, it is not unsaife to look to such, as have been eminent in the way of God, and lye neare to Him: for it is probable, they may know much of the minde of God, in those questioned matters: Hence, we finde the Apostle putting *Timothy* & others to this duty, in a time when false teachers were going abroad, saying *2 Tim. 3: 10*. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, &c. *1 Cor. 4: 16*. wherefore I beseech you be ye followers of me: & *1 Cor. 11: 1*. & Againe *Phil. 3: 17*. Brethren be followers together of me. All which say, that though we should call no man *Rabbi*, as hanging our faith absolutely on Him; yet in such a time of prevailing errour, and of false teachers going abroad, some respect should be had to such, as have found grace of the Lord to be faithfull in times of tryal, and have maintained truth, and stood for it, in times

persecution, and have with singleness of heart followed the Lord; It not being ordinarie with God, to leave such, as in sincerity seek Him, and desire to follow his way, in truth and uprightness; and to give the revelation of his minde, and the manifestation of his Spirit, to others, who have not gone thorow such trials.

19. They would also at such a time be much in the sincere practice of uncontroverted duties, and inputting uncontroverted and unquestionable and unquestioned truthes into practice: and this may prove a notable meane to keep them right: for then are they in God's way; and so the devil hath not that advantage of them, that he hath of others, who are out of the way of dutie. *David* understood more than the Ancients, because he kepted God's precepts *Psal. 119: 100*.

20. It were good and suteable at such a time, to be much in the feare of God; remembering what alone He is, and how hazardous it is to sin against Him, by drinking in the least point of error. The promise is made to such. *Psal. 25: 12. What man is he that feareth the Lord, him shall He teach in the way that he shall chuse.*

21. Finally, at such a time, they would be much in communion with Jesus, lying neare Him; much in prayer to Him, studying his Relations, Offices, Furniture, Readiness to helpe with light and counsel; and they would draw neare to Him with humility, boldness, faith, confidence, love, tenderness and sincerity; and then they shall not finde that He shall fail them or disappoint them.

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Enough of this. I proceed therefore to another case, which is,

CHAP. XVII.

How to make use of Christ, as the Truth, that we may get our case and condition cleared up to us.

THe beleever is oft complaining of darknes, concerning his case and condition, so as he cannot tell what to say of himself, or what judgment to palse on himself, and he knoweth not how to win to a distinct and clear discovery of his state and condition. Now, it is *Truth* alone, and the *Truth*, that can satisfie them as to this. The question then is, How they shall make use of, and apply themselves to this *Truth*, to the end, they may get the truth of their condition discovered to them. But first let us see, what this case may be. Consider then

1. That grace may be in the soul, and yet not be seen nor observed: this is manifest by daylie experience.

2. Not only so, but a gracious soul, that is reconciled with God in Christ, and hath the Spirit of grace dwelling in it, may suppose itself a stranger yet unto this reconciliation, and void of the grace of God, and so to be still in the state of nature.

3. Yea, a soul may not only suppose and conclude

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it self in nature, while it is in a state of grace, but
 further, may be filled with terrour and apprehen-
 sions of God's wrath and indignation; and that in
 such a measure, as that thereby it may be as a di-
 stracted person, as we see it was with Heman, Psal.
 13: 15. who said, *while I suffer thy terrours, I am*
distracted. The wrath of God lay hard upon Him,
 and he said, that he was afflicted with all God's
 waves vers. 7. hence he cryed out vers. 16, 17. *Thy*
fiere wrath goeth over me, thy terrours have cut
me off, they came round about me dayly, (or all
the day) like water, they compassed me about to-
gether, And yet for all this, the first word of his
 complaint was faith vers. 1. Many such complaints
 hear we out of Job's mouth, to whom God notwith-
 standing was that gracious, that he never came to
 question his state before God, or to conclude his
 hypocrisie, or his being still in the state of nature.
 But it is not so with every one, that is so ex-
 ercised.

4. Yea further, with those inward strokes upon
 the soul, they may have sin and guilt charged home
 upon their consciences: and this will make their
 life yet more bitter, & put a sharper edge upon the
 rods. Thus was Job made to possesse the sinnes of his
 youth, Job, 13: 26. and made to say, *My trans-*
gression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sowest up
mine iniquity Job. 14: 17.

5. Moreover, they may be in such a condition a
 long time, and all the while have no light of com-
 fort, as we see in Job and Heman. They may even
 walk in darknesse, and have no light & comfort
 Esai, 50: 10.

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6. Yea and also be without the hope of a delivery or outgate, Hence cryeth Heman Psal. 88: 4, 5. *I am counted with them that go downe into the pit, free among the dead, like the slaine that lye in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from thine hand. Yea they may be driven to the very border of despaire; and conclude that there is no hope; as the Church did, Ezek. 37: 11. Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts: and as Iob Chap. 7: 4. My dayes are swifter then a weavers shuttle, and are spent without hope, and Chap. 19: 10. He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone: mine hope hath he removed like a tree.*

Now though sometimes, as we see in Iob; and in Heman too, a soul may be under such a sad and sharpe dispensation, and yet not brought to question their state, or to conclude themselves children of wrath, lyeing still in blacke nature, yet it is not so with all, who are so exercised: but many, under such a dispensation, may, at least, be in the dark, as to their state before God: and if they do not positively assert their state to be bad; yet they do much question, if they be in the state of grace, and would be comforted under all their pressures and afflictions, if they could win to the least well grounded apprehension of their interest in Christ.

In such a case as this is, there is ground for a poor soul to make use of Christ for outgate; and an outgate may be had in God's time, and as He seeth fit, by a right use-making of and going out to Him, who is the Truth. So then the soul, that would have

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their state and condition cleared up, and a discovery of its being reconciled to God through Jesus, and in a state of grace, and would make use of Christ as *the Truth*, for this end, would

1. Look out to Christ, as a *feeling Highpriest*, faithful and merciful, who, being like us in all things except sin, doth sympathize with, and succour such as are tempted. Heb. 2: 17: 18. And as a Priest, *charis touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, Heb. 4: 15. Albeit Christ, in the deepest of his darknesse, was never made to question his sonshipe, but avouched God to be his God, even when he was forsaken, Psal. 22: 1. Mat. 27: 46. Mark. 15: 34. Yet He knew what it was to be tempted, to question his sonshipe, when the devil said unto Him Mat. 4. *if thou be the Son of God*, and He knows, what such a distresse, as He himself was into, wrestling with an angry God, hating himself and forsaking, will worke in a poor sinner, and being a merciful and sympathizing Highpriest, he cannot but pity such as are under such a distemper, and as a gracious Head sympathize with them. Now the believer would look out to Him, as such an one, and upon this ground go to Him with confidence and boldnesse, and lay out their case before Him, that He may helpe and send relieve.

2. They would also eye Christ, as able to save out of that condition, and to command light to shine out of darknesse, and so, as one able to face to the uttermost, all that come to God through Him. Heb. 7. 25.

3. And not only so, but eye Him also, as given and commissioned of the Father, to be a light to

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such, as sit in darknesse, even to the Gentiles. *Esa.* 42: 6. & 49: 6. *Luk.* 2: 32. *Act.* 13: 47. & 18: 23. *Iohn.* 8: 12. and this will encourage the poor Souls to go out to him, with their darknesse, when they see that He is sent, as a *Light*, and as *the Truth*, to clear up poor souls, that walk in darknesse and have no light: when they see, that it is his place and office to helpe them; and consider that He is true to his trust, and true and faithful, in all that was committed to Him, it not only will embolden them to come forward to Him, but it will strengthen their hope, and encourage them to waite on.

4. They would stay themselves on Him, as an *al sufficient helper*, renouncing all other; crying out, that they will have no light, but His light; and that they will seek no where else for light, but waite at His door, till He, who is *the Sun of righteousness*, arise in their soul, and come with hailing light in his wings.

5. They would by faith roll and cast their darkened souls, their confused case, their overwhelmed hearts, on Him, and leave them there: for He is the only physician: and the blinde soul must be put in his hand, who can take away the filme, and cause the scales fall off, and make light break in to the soul, and discover to it its condition.

6. It would be useful and very steadable, in such a time of darknesse, for the beleever, to be frequent in acting direct acts of faith on Christ: that is, be frequent in going to Him, as an *al sufficient Mediator*, as the only refuge and shadow, for a poor weary scorched soul *Esa.* 4. last & 32: 2. *And a man shall be as an hiding place from the winde,*
and

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and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a drye place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land: as one who is a strength to the needy in his distresse, a refuge from the storme, a shadow from the heat, &c. Esa. 25: 4. When the soul is thus overwhelmed with clouds, and doubteth of its interest in Christ, it would then purit out of doubt, by fleeing to Him for refuge from the storme of God's indignation, and lay hold on Him, as He is offered in the gospel; and thus renew its grips of Him, as the offered allsufficient Mediator; and frequent direct acts of faith will helpe at length to a reflex act. The soul that is daylie running to Christ, according to the covenant, with all its necessities; and laying hold on Him, as only able to helpe, will at length come to see, that it hath beleevd on Him, and is made welcome by Him, and accepted through Him. So that reiterated acts of faith on an offered Cautioner, and Salvation, will dispel at length those clouds of darknesse, that trouble the soul.

7. Such souls would beware of making their bands stronger, and their darknes greater, by their folly and unwise carriage: for this cause, they would beware,

1. To cry out in despondency of Spirit, as if there were no hope, and to conclude peremptorily, that they are cut off; and it is in vaine to waite any longer: for this course will but darken them more, and multiply the clouds over their head.

2. To run away from Christ through unbelcef and dispaire; for that will make their case yet worse.

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3. To walk untenderly and not circumspectly; for the more sins appear, the lesse light will be had. O but souls would be tender in all their conversation at that time, and guard against the least sin, or appearance of evill.

4. To fret and repine against God, because of that dispensation: for that will but entangle the soul more, and wreath the yock steeper about its neck; and put it self further out of case to be relieved, and so receive light.

8. Lastly, such would do well not to limite the holy one of Israel, but to waite with patience, till his time come, to speak in light to the soul; knowing that such as waite upon Him shall never be ashamed, *Esai. 49: 23.* because *He waiteth to be gracious; and therefore blessed are they all that waite upon him Esai. 30: 18.*

Quest. But what if for all this, I get no outgate, but my distress and darkness rather grow upon my hand?

Ans. That such a thing may be. I grant, the Lord thinking it fit. (1.) To exercise their faith, dependence, patience, hope, and desire more. (2.) And to discover more unto them their own weakness, faintings, faithlesness. (3.) To shew his absolute power and sovereignty. (4.) To make his grace and mercy more conspicuous & remarkable at length: and. (5.) To traine them up in a way of dependence on him in the dark; and of leaning to him, when walking in darknesse; yea and in a way of beleeving, when they think they have no faith at all; and for other holy ends. Yet the soul would not despond; for there are several things,

that

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that may serve to support and beate up the heart, even in that case; as

1. This is not their case alone: Others have been in the like before; and many have had the like complaints in all ages, as is known to such as have been acquainted with exercised souls.

2. It may yeeld peace and comfort, to know that they are about duty, when looking to Him, and depending upon Him, and waiting for his light.

3. The promises made to such, as waite for Him, may support the soul, and yeeld comfort.

4. The distinct knowledge and uptaking of their condition; though it be comfortable and refreshing; yet it is not absolutely necessary. A soul may be a saved soul, though those clouds should continue to its dying day; and though, as long as they lived, they should never get a clear discovery of their gracious state; but spend their dayes in mourning, complaining, and crying out of darkness, &c.

5. Such a soul should think that its much, that he is kept out of hell so long; and surely the thoughts of what he is, and of what he deserveth, may make him sober, and not to think much, though he reach not so high; as to see his name written in the book of life.

6. They would know, that full assurance of hope and of faith, is but rare; and even such as have it do not ordinarily keep it long: So that it should not much trouble them, if after all their paines they cannot win at it.

7. If they win to any real ground of hope, how

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small so ever, they should think much of that; for many dear to Christ live long, and never know what so much is.

8. It is no small matter, that they are not sinking in the gulf of inconsideration, and plagued with an indifferency in these matters; but are made to value Christ and an interest in Him, at such a rate.

9. Their going to Christ with all their wants, laying all on Him; and their making that their daylie exercise, may keep up their hearts from fainting; yea and fill their souls with joy: for that is really the exercise of faith. And the great and gracious promises are made to such as beleeve, and not to such only, as know they do beleeve. I grant such as know not that they do beleeve, cannot draw comfort from these promises; yet it is as true, that one may, by reflecting on the actings of his own soul, see and know that really he is going out to Christ, forsaking himself, casting his burden on Him, waiting and depending upon Him: when yet he will not say, that he doth beleeve; and when he seeth this working of soul toward Christ, he is obliged to beleeve, that he beleeveeth, and thereupon rejoyce in the hope of the great promises. And however, the very sight and knowledge of this acting and motion of soul, may give them some comfort, though they shall not take it for faith; because, it is the way of duty, and it is the thing, which the gospel calleth for; and because they cannot show an instance of any one soul, that did so, and perished. But the truth is, the right understanding of the nature

word, upon to be long last you of new words of
Hail

forgetting right thoughts of God. 277

offaith, would cleare many doubts, and prevent many questions.

I come to speak a little to the last case, which I shall handle, which is

C H A P. XVIII.

How we shall make use of Christ, as the Truth, that we may win to right and sureable thoughts of God.

This is a case, that much troubleth the people of God. They cannot get right and sureable thoughts of God, which they earnestly desire to have; nor know not how to win at them. And certane it is, He only who is the Truth, and came out of the bosome of the Father, can helpe here. Therefore, for our use making of Him for this end; It would be remembered.

1. That the minde of man, through the fall, is nothing but a masse of ignorance and blindness, that the understanding is darkned Ephes. 4: 17, 18. And naturally we are in darknesse 1 Iohn. 2: 9, 11. Yea under the power of darknesse. Col. 1: 13. And, which is more, our mindes naturally are filled with prejudice against God and enmity, through wickednesse, naturally residing there, and which the Prince of the powers of the aire, the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, increaseth and stirreth up.

2. That this evil is not totally taken away, even in the godly, but helped only in part: for they see

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and know but in part. 1 Cor. 13: vers. 13.
3. That hence it cometh to passe, that through the working of corruption, the soul of a believer can sometime win to no right thought of God at all, or at best to some very narrow, and unsutable conceptions of Him and his wayes: yea sometimes, all the thoughts that they can get of God, are vaine and idle, if not misshapen and blasphemous.

4. That as we are, we cannot see God: for no man hath seen Him Mat. 11: 27. Iohn. 4: 45. for He is an invisible God, 1 Tim. 1: 17. Heb. 11: 27. He dwelleth in light, which no man can approach unto. Him no man hath seen, nor can see 1 Tim. 6: 16. 1 Iohn. 4: 12.

5. That all that knowledge of God, which is saving, is to be found in Christ, who is the brightness of his glory, & the expresse image of his person. Heb. 1: 3. and the image of the invisible God Col. 1: 5. and is for this end come out from the bosom of the Father, that He might acquaint us with Him, and with all his secrets Iohn. 1: 18. Mat. 11: 27. so far as is needful for us to know. He is God incarnate, that in Him we may see the invisible. The God is manifest in the flesh 1 Tim. 3: 16. and the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us Iohn. 1: 14.

6. That therefore, if we would see and know God we must go to Christ, who is the temple, in which God dwelleth and manifesteth his glory; and in and through Him, must we see and conceive of God. The light that we get of the knowledge of the glory of God, must be in the face of Jesus Christ 2 Cor. 4: 6. that is, in the manifestations, that Christ hath

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hath made of himself, in his Natures, Offices, Ordinances, Works, Dispensations of grace, mediate and immediate &c. And thus doth God, who commanded the light to shine out of darknesse, cause this light of the knowledge of his glory shine into our hearts, viz. in the face of Iesus Christ; that is, in the dispensations of grace in the gospel; which is the glorious gospel of Christ 2 Cor. 4:4. and, as it were, the face of Iesus Christ: for, as by the face a man is best known, and distinguished from others; so Christ is visibly, discernably, and manifestly seen and known, in and by the gospel dispensations; there are all the lineaments and draughts of the glory of God, which we would know, lively and clearly to be seen.

So then, if we would make use of Christ for this end, that we may win to a right sight of God, and true conceptions of his glory, we would consider those things.

1. We would live under the sense and through conviction of the greatness and incomprehensibleness of God; as being every way past finding out; and also under the conviction of our own darknesse, and incapacity to conceive aright of Him, even as to what He hath revealed of himself.

2. We would know, that what the works of Creation and Providence declare and preach forth of God, though it be sufficient to make Heathens and others, that do not improve the same to a right acknowledging of him, inexcusable; as Paul teacheth us, Rom. 1:20. yet all that is short of giving to us that saving knowledge of Him, which must be had, and which is life eternal. John. 17: 2.

3. We

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3. We would know, that what of God is to be found out by the works of creation and providence, is more distinctly seen in Christ, and in the gospel. Here is a greater and more glorious discovery of God, and of his glorious attributes, his Justice, Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Holiness, Truth &c. than can be found by the deepest diving naturalist, and most wise moral observer of providence, that is not taught out of the Gospel.

4. Yea, there is something of God to be seen in Christ, in the gospel, which can be observed in none of his works of creation, or common providence: there is the *grace of God that bringeth salvation*, that is made to appear only by the gospel. *Tit. 2: 11.* and there is a *peculiar kindenesse and love of God toward man*, which is only discovered by Christ in the gospel, *Tit. 3: 4.* There is that *manifest wisdom of God*, that mystrie, which was hid from the beginning of the world in God; that Principallities and powers in heavenly places, the greatest and wisest of naturalists, must learne by the church; wherein that is preached and proclaimed, by the dispensations of the gospel. *Ephes. 3: 9, 10.* His *mercy pardoning poor sinners*, justice being *satisfied*, can not be cleared by nature. Nature cannot unfold that mystery of justice and mercy, concurring to the salvation of a sinner, only the gospel can cleare that riddle.

5. We would remember, that all the beames of that glory, which are necessary and useful, for us to know, are, to speak so, contracted in Christ and there veiled, to the end that we may more steadily look upon them. We may go to our Brother,

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who is flesh of our flesh, and there, through the
vail of his flesh, see and behold what other wayes
was invisible: as we can look to the sun better shine-
ing in a pale of water, than by looking up im-
mediatly; so can we behold God and his glory
better in Christ, where there is a thinn: vail (to speak
so) drawne over that otherwise blinding yea kill-
ing: glory, than by looking to God without
Christ: for alas we could not endure one glance of
an immediat ray of divine glory, it would kill us
outright.

6. We must then go to Christ, and there see
God: for He who seeth Him, seeth the Father also.
Iohn 14: 9. Particularly, we must go to the face of
Iesus Christ, that is, that, whereby He hath made him-
self known, the noble contrivance of the glorious
gospel; wherein all things are so carryed on, as
that God is glorified in his Son, in the salvation
of poor sinners. The whole work of salvation is
laid on Christ, and the Father is glorified in Him,
who is his servant and his chosen, whom He up-
holdeth and furnisheth for the work *Esai. 42: 1, 2.*
He is called the Covenant it self: He is the underta-
ker in the covenant of Redemption, and in the cove-
nant of Grace: all is founded on Him; all the good
things of it are given out by Him: all the grace,
by which we close with it, and accept of Him, ac-
cording to it, is given by Him. Now, in this
gospel contrivance are all the lines of the glorious
face of Christ to be seen: and in that face must we see
and discern the glory of God; all the rayes of
which are centred in Christ, and there will we get
a noble prospect of that glorious object. So that
all

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all such, as would make use of Christ for this end, that they might come to have right and suitable thoughts and apprehensions of God, must be well acquainted with the whole draught and frame of the gospel; and so acquainted therewith, as to see Christ the substance, ground, and all of it, and to see Him in every part of it.

7. Whatever we know or learne of God, by his works of Creation or Providence; in the world or about ourselves, we would bring it in here, that it may receive a new tincture, and a deeper impression. That is done, when we finde and learne something of Christ there; and are brought nearer Christ thereby; and made thereby to discover something more of the glory of God in the face of Christ; or are made to understand better something of the revelation, that is made of God in the gospel; or moved thereby to improve it better.

8. In all this matter, we must not go without our guide, lest we wander in this wilderness, and it prove a labyrinth to us. We must take Christ with us all alongs: He must teach us to understand his own face: and to read the glorious characters of that excellent glory, which is to be seen in his face: He must be our interpreter, and teach us, how to read this book, and how to understand what is written therein; He must give the discerning eye, and the understanding heart: even the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, to take up the mysteries of God.

9. And for this cause, we would by faith lay hold upon the promises of the Spirit, whereby we may be made spiritual, and have our understandings

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ings enlightened more and more, to understand the mysterious characters of divine Majesty and Glory.

10. In all this exercise, we would walk with fear, & carry with us impressions of the dreadful Majesty and Glory of God, that we may tremble and feare, and stand in awe, and read what we read of this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, this glorious visible, with reverence, and godly fear.

And thus may we be helped to win to right and suitable thoughts of God; yet with all we would, for

Cautions,

Consider a few things further, as

1. That we must not think, to search out the Almighty unto perfection, *Iob. 11: 7.*

2. Nor must we think, to get any one point of God known & understood perfectly: corruption will mix-in it self, do our best; and our shortcomings will not easily be reckoned up.

3. We must beware of carnal curiosity, and of unlawful diving-in in this depth, lest we drowne.

4. We would not dreame of a stite here, where we will not need Christ for this end. Yea, I suppose, in glory, He will be of use to us, as to the seeing of God: for even there, as he is to day, so shall he for ever abide, God and man in two distinct natures and one person; and that cannot be forgotten: and as God will be still God, invisible & unsearchable; so we, though glorified, will remaine finite creatures; and therefore will stand in need of Christ.

Christ, that in his glorious face we may see the invisible. He must be our *lumen gloriae*.

5. We should think it no small matter, to have the impression of this sight upon our hearts, that we cannot see Him; and that we, in this state of sin, cannot get right and suitable apprehensions of Him. I say, the *impression of this* on our spirits, that is, such a sight of an impossibility to get Him seen aright, as will keep the heart in awe, & cause us walk before Him in feare and reverence, and to humble ourselves in the dust, & to tremble when ever we make mention of his name, or beginne to meditate on Him, knowing how great an one He is, and how dangerous it is to think amisse of Him, & how difficult to get a right thought of him.

CHAP. XIX.

And the Life.

How Christ is the Life.

THis, as the former, being spoken indefinitely, may be universally taken, as relating both to such as are yet in the State of nature, and to such as are in the state of grace; and so may be considered in reference to both, & ground three points of truth, both in reference to the one, and in reference to the other, To wit, 1. That our case is such as we stand in need of his helpe, as being *the Life*. 2. That no other way but by Him can we get that supply of life, which we stand in need of; for He only is *the Life*, excluding all other. 3. That this help, is to be had in Him fully and

and compleetly: for not only is He able to quicken, but He is called *the Life*. So that the help, which he giveth, is full, excellent, and compleet.

Looking upon the words, in reference to such as are in Nature, they point out those three truths to us.

First. That all of us by nature are dead, standing in need of quickening and of life: for this is presupposed, while He is said to be *the Life*: and that both *legally* and *really*: *legally* being under the sentence of death, for *Adams* transgression *Rom. 5: 15.* and for that original corruption of heart we have: and *Really*, the sentence of the law being in part executed; & that both as to the *body*, & as to the *soul*. As to the *body*. It is now subject to death, and all the forerunners thereof, such as weaknesse, paines, sicknesse, feares, torment, trouble, wearynesse; yea and in hazard of hell fire, and the torments of the second death for ever. As to the *soul*, it also is many wayes dead, both first in a way that is *purely penal*, and next in a way that is *also sinful*; and both wayes, as to what is *present*, and as to what is *future*: for as to that which is *penal* and *present*. It is (1) separated from God and his favour *Gen. 3: 8, 10, 24.* (2) is under his curse and wrath, whence it cometh to passe, that *by nature we are children of wrath* *Ephes. 2: 2, 5.* *Servants of Satan* *2 Tim. 2: 26.* The consequence of which is sad and heavy; for hence it is that we cannot please God, do what we will: till we be brought out of that state, our ordinary & civil actions, even *plowing the ground*, is sin. *Prov. 21: 4.* Yea our Religious actions, whether natural or instituted, are abomination; even our
sacri.

sacrifices Prov. 15: 8. & 21: 27. & *prayers* Prov. 21: 9. Ps. 10: 7. Yea and all our *thoughts* & *purposes* Prov. 15: 26. and likewise all our *wayes* Prov. 13: 9. As to what is *penal* and *future*, it is obnoxious to that everlasting excommunication from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power 2 Thes. 1: 9. and to the torments of hell for ever Mark. 9: 44, 46, 48 Luk. 16. As to what is not only *penal*, but also *sinful*, the soul here is under the stroke of darkness in the understanding, perverseness and rebelliousness in the will, irregularity & disorder in the affections, whereby the soul is unfit for any thing that is good, & prone to every thing that is evil. Rom. 3: 10-20. Ephes. 2: 1, 2, 3. Rom. 5: 6. & 8: 7, 8, whence proceedeth all our actual transgressions. Lam. 1: 14, 15. And moreover sometimes the soul is given up to a *reprobate minde* Rom. 1: 28. to *strong delusions* 2 Thes. 2: 2. to *hardness of heart* Rom. 2: 5. *horror of conscience* Esa. 33: 14. to *vile affections* Rom. 1: 26 and the like spiritual plagues; which, though the Lord inflict on some only, yet all are obnoxious to the same by nature, & can expect no less, if the Lord should enter with them into judgment. And finally, as to what is *future* of this kinde, they are, being fuel for Tophet, obnoxious to that malignant, sinful, blasphemous and desperat rebellion against God, in hell for ever more.

O how lamentable, upon this consideration, must the condition of such be, as are yet in the state of nature. Oh if it were but seen and felt! But alas there is this addition to all, that people know not this, they consider it not, they believe it not, they feel it not, they see it not: and hence it cometh to passe, that

1. They

1. They cannot bewail and lament their condition, nor be humbled therefore.

2. They cannot, nor will not, seek after a remedie: for the whole will not trouble themselves to seek after a physician.

And sure upon this account, their case calleth for pity and compassion from all, that know, what a dreadful thing it is to be in such a condition: and should stirre up all to pray for them, and to do all they can to helpe them out of that state of sin and misery, which is dreadful to think upon.

Should not the thoughts and consideration of this put us all to try and search, if we be yet translated from death to life, and delivered out of that terrible and dreadful state, and made partakers of the first resurrection. It not being my purpose, to handle this point at large, I shall not here insist in giving marks, whereby this may be known, and which are obvious in *Paul's* Epistles, & to be found handled at large in several practical pieces, chiefly in Mr. *Guthries Great interest*. I shall only desire every one to consider and examine,

1. Whether or not, the voice of Christ, which quickeneth the dead, hath been heard and welcomed in their soul? This is effectual calling.

2. Whether or not, there be a through change wrought in their soul, a change in the whole Man, so as all things are become new 2 Cor. 5: vers. 17?

3. Whether or not, there be a Principle of life within? And they be led by the Spirit?

4. Whether or not, there be a living to the glory of the Lord Redeemer?

And

And when by impartial tryal, a discovery is made of the badness of our condition, should we not be alarmed to look about us, and to labour by all means for an outgate, considering, (1.) How doubtful and lamentable this condition is. (2.) How bad and dreadful the consequents of it are. (3.) How happy a thing it is to be delivered from this miserable and sinful condition: and, (4.) How there is a possibility of outgate.

Finally, It may break a heart of stone to think, how people, that are in such a condition, are so unwilling to come out of it: for,

1. How unwilling are they, once to suspect their condition, or to suppose that it may be bad, and that they may be yet unconverted?

2. How unwilling are they, to sit down seriously to try and examine the matter, and to lay their case to the touch-stone of the word?

3. Yea, how unwilling are they, to hear any thing that may tend to awaken them, or to discover unto them the badness of their condition?

4. How ready to still: challenges of conscience, or any common motion of the Spirit, which tendeth to alarme their soul?

5. How great enemies are they to such ordinances, as serve to awaken sleeping consciences?

6. And how do they hate such ministers, as preach such doctrine, as may serve to rouse them up, and set them a work about their own salvation?

Secondly, We learne hence. That without Christ there is no imaginable way of delivery out of this natural state of death. No other name is given under heaven

heaven whereby we can be saved. *Ab. 4: 12.* and angels can make no help here, nor can one of us deliver another; the redemption of the 'soul is more precious then so *Psal. 49: 7, 8.* Nor is there any thing we can do for ourselves, that will availe here; all our prayers, teares, whippings, fastings, vows, almes deeds, purposes, promises, resolutions, abstinence from some evils, outward amendements, good morality and civility, outward religiousnesse, yea and, if it were possible, our keeping of the whole law, will not helpe us out of this pit. And we may weary ourselves in such exercises in vaine; for they will prove but bodylic exercises that profite little. And when in this way, we have spent all our time, parts, spirits and labour, we shall at length see, and say, that we have spent our money for that which is not bread.

This should put all of us to try, what it is, which we leane to for life; and what it is, the consideration whereof giveth us peace and quietnesse, when the thoughts of death, judgment, hell and the wrath of God come upon us, and trouble us: for if it be any thing beside Christ that our soul leaneth to, and that we are comforted by, and found all our hopes upon, we will meet with a lamentable (oh! for ever lamentable!) disappointment. Be sure then, that our hearts renunce all other wayes and meanes of outgate, out of this death, beside Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, else it will not be well with us.

Thirdly, We see here. That delivery out of this natural state of death, is only had by Christ: for He alone is *the Life*, and the life that is in Him is

suitable and excellent. Hence he is called the **bread of life** *Iohn. 6: 35, 48.* The **resurrection and the life** *Iohn. 11: 25.* The **water of life** *Revel. 21: 6. & 22: 17.* The **tree of life** *Revel. 22: 2, 14.* The **Prince of life** *Act. 3: 15.* our **life** *Col. 3: 4.* The **word of life**, and **life** it self *1 Iohn. 1: 1, 2.*

And as He is a suitable and excellent life; so is He an **allufficient** and perfect life, able every way to helpe us, and to deliver us from all the parts of our death. For

1. He delivereth from the sentence of the law *Rom. 5: 17, 18.* undergoing the curse of the law, and becoming a curse for us *2 Cor. 5. last.*

2. He taketh away the curse and sting of all temporal plagues, yea and of death it self, causing all **work together for good to such as love Him** *Rom. 8: 28.* He hath killed Him, that had the power of death, that is, the devil *Heb. 2: 14.* And through Him, the sting of death, which is sin, is taken away *1 Cor. 15: 56, 57.*

3. He reconcileth to God, taking away that distance and enmity *2 Cor. 5: 20.* and so He is our **peace** and peace-maker, purchasing access to us to the Father *Ephes. 2: 14, 16. & 3: 12.*

4. He also delivereth from the power of sin and corruption *Rom. 7: 24.*

5. And from all those spiritual stroakes; such as blindness, hardness of heart, &c: for He is our **light**, and hath procured a new heart for us, even an heart of flesh.

6. So delivereth He from hell fire, having satisfied justice, and having brought life and im-

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mortality to light. And He giveth life eternal, as we see Rev. 2. & 3.

Oh! it is sad, that Christ is so little made use of, and that so many will forsake the fountaine of living waters, and dig to themselves brocken cisterns, that can hold no water; and slight, despise and undervalue the gospel of Christ, which bringeth life and immortality to light.

Oh! if the consideration of this, could move men, as never found any change in themselves, to trust and make use of Jesus Christ, for life: and would for this end,

1. Cry to Him, that He would make them sensible of their deadnesse, and waken them out of their deep sleep.

2. Cry to Him, to set them a work to renounce all other helpe beside his, as being utterly unable to quicken, and put life in them.

3. Cry to Him, that He would draw and determine their souls, to a closing with Him by faith alone, to a hearing of his voice, to an obeying of his call, to a following of his direction, to a giving up of themselves to Him, leaning to Him, and waiting for all from Him alone: in a word, to take Him for their life in all points, and to lean to Him for life, and to expect it from Him, through faith in the promises of the gospel.

Next, This being spoken to the disciples, whom we suppose to have been beleevers, it will give us ground to speak of it, in reference to beleevers, and we yield three points of truth, which we shall briefly touch, and then come to speak of use-making of Christ, as the Life, in some particular cases.

First. It is here clearly presupposed, that even beleevers have need of Christ to be life unto them; so have their fits of deadnesse. If it were not so, why would Christ have said to beleevers, *that He was life?* And daylie experience doth abundantly confirme it. For

1. They are oft so weak and unable to resist temptation, or to go about any commanded duty, as if they were quite dead.

2. They are oft so borne down with discouragement, because of the strength of opposition, which they meet with on all hands; and because of the manifold disappointments, which they meet with, that they have neither heart nor hand; and they faint and sit up, in the wayes of the Lord, and cannot go thorow difficulties, but oftentimes lye by.

3. Through daylie fighting, and seeing no victory, they become weary and faint hearted; so that they lye by as dead; *Esai. 40: 29.*

4. They oft fall sick and decay, and have need of restauration and quickning.

5. The want of the sense of God's favour, and the comforts of the holy ghost, maketh them to dwine, and droup, and look out as dead.

6. While under some desertions, upon one account or other, they look upon themselves as if among the dead, that is, as dead men, of the society of the dead, with *Heman Psal. 88.*

7. Yea many times, they are as dead men, and captive in chaines of unbelceef, and convictions, as we see *David* was, when his heart failed, and his strength failed him, and the

light of his eyes was gone from him. *Psal. 38: 10.*

8. Many times the frequent changes, and ups and downs they meet with, take all courage and heart from them, that they become like men tossed at sea, so as they have no more strength.

And many such things befall them, which make them look as dead, and to stand in need of quickening, reviving and strengthening cordials from Him, who is *the Life*. And thus the Lord thinketh good to dispense with his owne people.

1. That they may be kepted humble, and know themselves to be indigent creatures, needing influences of life daylie.

2. That they may have many errands to Him, who is *the Life*, and have much to do with Him, and depend upon Him continually.

3. That He may shew himself wonderful, in and about them, giving proof of His skill in quickening the dead, and in bringing such thorow unto everlasting life, who were daylie, as it were, giving up the ghost, and at the point of death.

4. That heaven may be heaven; that is, a place where the weary are at rest *Iob. 3: 17.* and the troubled rest *2 Thes. 1: 7.* And where the inhabitants shall not say they are sick *Esaie. 33: vers. 24.*

5. That they may be taught more the life of faith and of dependence on Him, and trained up in that way.

6. That He may be owned, acknowledged and submitted unto, as a Sovereigne God, doing what He will, in heaven and in earth.

For all this, there is no cause, that any should

take up any prejudice at christianity: for, for all this, their life is sure, and the outgate is sure and safe. Nor would they think it strange, to see beleevers oft mourning and drouping, seing their case will oft call for new supplies of life. Their fits are not known to every one; nor doth every one know what lyeth sometime at their hearr.

Nor would they think it such an easie matter, to win to heaven, as they imagine, and so deceive themselves. The righteous are saved through many deaths.

And as for beleevers, They would not think it strange, to meet with such fits of deadnesse; nor thence conclude, that all their former work was but delusion, and that they are still into the state of nature. But rather observe the wisdom, faithfulness and power of God, in bringing their brocken shipe thorow so much brocken water; yea and shipwracks; and his goodnesse in ordering matters so, as they shall be kept humble, warchful, diligent, and constant in dependence upon Him, who is and must be their life, first and last. And hence learne a necessitie of living alwayes neare to Christ, and depending constantly upon Him by faith; for, he being their life, they cannot be without Him, but they must die and decay.

Secondly, We hence learne. That under all these fits of deadnesse, to which his people are subject, nothing without Christ will helpe. Nor

1. All their paines in and about ordinary measures, prayer, reading, hearing, meditation, conference &c. They will all cry out, that help is not in them: for He is *the Life*.

2. Nor

2. Nor extraordinary duties. Such as fasting and prayer, and vows, these will never revive & quicken a drouping or fainting sickly soul: for they are not Christ; nor *the Life*.

3. Nor will a stout couragious Spirit, and resolution of heart avail. If He, who is *the Life*, breathe not, all that will melt away, and evanish.

4. Nor will the stock of habitual grace, which remaineth in the soul, be sufficient to quicken and revive the sick soul: if *the Life* breathe not on these habites, and if new influences of life and strength flow not in upon the soul, and new rayes come not down from this sun of righteousness, to warme the frozen soul, the habites will lye by as dead.

5. Far lesse will their great gifts and enduements helpe them out of that dead condition: all their light and knowledge, without the influences of this *Life*, will prove weak and insufficient for this end and purpose.

6. Nor will sound, pure, and lively like ordinances work out this effect: for till He look down, all those ordinances may prove dead and deadning to them.

It were good if beleivers were living under the conviction of this daylie, and, by their practice and carriage, declaring that they believe, that Christ only is *the Life*, and that they must live in Him, and be quickened and revived through Him alone.

Thirdly, We see hence. That Christ is *the Life*; that is, one that sufficiently, yea and abundantly, can helpe the beleever, while under those fits of deadnesse, which have been mentioned, and the like. There is in him a rich supply of all things, that tend

to revive, encourage, strengthen, and enliven a soul, under spiritual deadnesse and fainting. Therefore is He called *the Life*; as having in Him all that, which is necessary for, and answerable to souls under spiritual sicknesses, distempers, desertions, fainting & swooning fits, &c. for with Him is the *fountaine of life* Psal. 36: 9. and He it is that *upholderth the soul in life* Psal. 66: 9. and can *command the blessing, even life for evermore* Psal. 133: vers. 3.

For further clearing of this, we would consider those things.

1. That He is God, equal with the Father in power and glory, and thereby *hath life in himself* Iohn. 5: 26. and can *quicken whom He will.* vers. 21. By this He proveth there his own godhead & equality with the Father. So Iohn. 1: 4. It is said that *in Him was life; and that life was the light of men*, whereby also his Godhead is confirmed. This should be firmly beleaved, and rooted in our hearts, as being the ground of all our hope, comfort and life: for were it not so, that our Mediator were the true God, all our hopes were gone, our comforts could not be long lived, and our life were extinct.

2. As mediator God-man, He is fully and througly furnished to quicken and enliven his members and followers, first and last: and all alongs their life must be hid with Christ in God, for *in Him dwelleth the fulnesse of the godhead bodily* Col. 2: 9. as mediator he is called a *tree of life* Prov. 3: 18. quickening and enlivening all that feed upon Him; and *the bread of life.* Iohn. 6: 35, 48. Ye
became

because of power and authoritie to command life to the dead soul, He is called the *Prince of life* *Act. 3: 15*. and as a *living quickening stone*, he giveth life to all that are built upon Him *1 Pet. 2: 4*. Yea as being fully fitted and furnished for this work, He calleth himself *the resurrection and the life* *Iohn. 11: 25*. This should be riveted in our hearts, as a comfortable and encouraging truth.

3. Of this stock of life, and quickening and reviving grace, which He hath got, and is furnished withal, as Mediator and Redeemer of his people, He is communicative: of his fulnesse do we receive, and grace for grace *Iohn. 1: 16*. He got it, that He might give it out; and that from Him as an head it might flow out unto his members, and therefore He is the bread that came downe from heaven, and giveth life to the world *Iohn. 6: 35*. Yea He giveth eternal life to all his sheep *Ioh. 10: 28*. and He is come for this end, that his sheep might have life *Iohn. 10: 10*. Therefore hath he taken on such relations, as may give ground of confirmation of this, as of an head, of a stock or root, and the like. This consideration is strengthening and reviving.

4. He communiceth of this stock of life, and of reviving strength, which He hath, most sweetly, and on most easie termes. So that

(1.) Such as seek him shall finde life by Him *Psal. 69: 32*.

(2.) Yea such as know Him, shall not misse life. *Iohn. 17: 3*. & *Iohn. 5: 20*.

(3.) If we will beleeve on Him and rest upon him, we have life, first and last *Iohn. 3: 15, 16* 36. & 6: 40, 47. & *1 Tim. 1: 16*.

(4.) If we will come to Him *Iohn. 5: vers. 40.* and cast our dead soul upon him, we shall live.

(5.) If we will heare his voice *Eesai. 55: 3.* and receive his instructions we shall live; for they are the instructions of life.

(6.) Nay, if the soul be so dead, that it can neither walk, nor hear, if it can but look to Him, he will give life *Eesai. 45: 22.*

7. And if the soul be so weak, that it cannot look, nor lift up its eyes; yet if it be willing, He will come with life *Revel. 22: 17.*

Oh! if this were beleaved.

5. As he is communicative of that life, which he hath gotten as Head, and that upon easie termes; so He giveth out of that life liberally, largely, abundantly; yea more abundantly *Iohn. 10: 10.* The water of life, which He giveth, is a well of water springing up to everlasting life *Iohn. 4: 14.* Therefore he alloweth his friends to drink abundantly *Cant. 5: 1.*

6. Yet it would be remembered, that, He is Lord and master thereof, and Prince of this life, and so may dispense it and give it out, in what measure He seeth fit, and He is wise to measure out best for his own glory, and to their advantage.

7. All this life is sure in Him, none of his shall be disappointed thereof. His offices, which He hath taken on; and his commission, which he hath of the Father, abundantly cleare this; and love to his will not suffer him to keep up any thing, that is for their advantage. He is faithful in his house as a Son: and will do all that was committed unto Him to do. The whole transaction of the covenant of

Redemp-

Redemption and Surety-shipe, and all the promises of the new Covenant of grace confirmethis, to be a sure truth: so that they that have Him have life. 1 John. 5: 12. Prov. 8: 35.

8. Yea all that is in Christ contributeth to this life and quickening; His Words and Doctrine, are the words of eternal life John. 6: 63, 68. Phil. 2: 16. His Works and Wayes are the wayes of life Act. 2: 28. His Natures, Offices, Sufferings, Actings, and all He did as Mediator, concurre to the quickening and enlivening of a poor dead soul.

9. This fulness of life, which He hath, is fully suited to the beleevers condition, in all points, as we shall hear.

10. This life is eminently and transcendently in Him, and exclusively of all others. It is in Him, and in Him alone; and it is in Him, in a most excellent manner. So that He is *the Life*, in the abstract; not only a living head, and an enlivening head; but Life it self, *the Life*, the Resurrection and the Life.

C H A P. XX.

Some general uses.

BEfore we come to speak of some particular cases of deadnesse, wherein beleevers are to make use of Christ, as *the Life*, we shall first propose some useful consequences and deductions from what hath been spoken of this life, and.

First. The faith of those things, which have been mentioned, would be of great use and advantage to beleivers: and therefore they should study to have the faith of this truth fixed on their hearts, and a deep impression thereof on their spirits, to the end, that

1. Be their case and condition what it will, they might be kepted from dispaire, and despondency of spirit, from giving over their case as hopeles, and from looking upon themselves as irremediably gone. The faith of Christs being Life, and *the Life*, would keep up the soul in hope, and cause it say; how dead so ever my case be, yet *Life* can help me, and He, who is *the resurrection* and *the Life*, can recover me.

2. Yea, be their case and condition what it wil, they would have here some ground of encouragement, to goe to Him with their dead soul, and to look to Him for helpe, seing He is *the Life*, as mediator, to the end He might enliven and quicken his dead, fainting, swooning members, and to recover them from their deadness.

3. They might be freed from many scruples and objections, that scar and discourage them. This one truth beleevd would cleare up the way so, as that such things, as would have been impediments and objections before, shall evanish and be rolled out of the way now: such as are the objections taken from their own worthlesness, their long continuance in that dead condition, and the like.

4. They might hereby likewise be freed from that dreadful plague and evil of jealousy, whereby the soul is oft kepted aback from coming to Christ:

for

for they feare, He will not make them welcome; they doubt of his love and tenderneſſe, and questione his pity and compaſſion; yea their jelaouſie maketh them to doubt of his faithfulneſſe. So that the faith of this truth would cure this jelaouſie, and deliver the ſoul therefrom, and open a way for the ſoul to come forward with boldneſſe and confidence.

5. They might alſo be hereby helped to waite with patience, and to be ſtill and quiet under the Lord's various diſpenſations: ſo as they would not fret nor repine againſt him, knowing that He would prove himſelf to be Life, even *the Life*, in his own good time: ſo that the ſoul would patiently waite at his door, till He were pleaſed to look out, and with his look convey life in to their dead ſoul.

6. They might be preſerved hereby from looking out to, or expecting any help from, any other arth: knowing that He alone is *the Life*, and ſo, that help can no where elſe be had. The faith of this truth would guard from many ſiniſtrous waies, which the ſoul, in a time of ſtraite, is ready to run to, for reliefe: for hereby would it ſee, that neither instruments, nor meanes, nor outward adminiſtrations, nor any thing of that kinde, can quicken their dead ſoul; and that He, and He alone, muſt breathe in life into them, as at firſt, ſo now againe.

Secondly, May we not ſee and obſerve here great matter of admiration, at the goodneſſe and rich bounty of God towards his people, who hath found out and condeſcended upon ſuch a ſure, ſaife and ſatisfying way, whereby he becometh all things to his

his people, which they stand in need of; and that notwithstanding

1. That we are most unworthy of any such dispensation of grace at his hands.

2. That we too oft are too desirous of other guests in our hearts, beside Him. O How much corruption, sin and death lodge we within our souls! and how more desirous are we oftimes of death, than of life!

3. That we little improve the noble advantages for life, which we have granted unto us: yea many a time we abuse them; and this He did foresee, and yet notwithstanding would condescend thus unto us.

4. That we do little expresse our thankfulness for such mercies.

But not for our sakes hath He done this, but for his owne names sake: for noble and holy ends hath He resolved upon this course; as

1. That He might be *all and in all* Col. 3: 11. and they nothing. That He alone might *fill all in all* Ephes. 1. ult, and they be empty & nothing without Him:

2. That He might weare the glory of all; *for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things* Rom. 11. last, and that no man might share therein.

3. That Man might be His everlasting debtor, and cast downe, in testimony thereof, his crowne at His feet, who sitteth on the throne, as those did *Revel. 4: 10.* and might cry out with these same elders *vers. 11. Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive glory & honour and power &c.* and with those *Chap. 5: 12. worthy*

worthy is the lamb that was slaine, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, & honour, and glory, and blessing.

4. That mans mouth might be stopped for ever, and all boasting excluded: for man is a proud creature, and ready to boast of that, which is nothing and vanity. Now God hath chosen this noble way of the covenant of grace, that man might boast no more. *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? by the law of works? no, but by the law of faith, sayeth the Apostle, Rom. 3: vers. 24.*

5. That all might be sure to the poor chosen beleever. The Lord will not have the stock of life, any longer to be in mans own hand: for even Adam, in the state of innocency, could not use it well, but made shipwrack thereof, and turned a bankrupt: much more would man now do so, in this state of sin, in which he lyeth at present; therefore Hath God, out of love and tenderresse to his chosen ones, put all their stock in the hand of Christ, who is better able to manage it, to God's glory and mans advantage, being faithful in all things, and a trusty servant, *having the fulnesse of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodyly. Therefore (sayeth the Apostle Rom. 4: 16.) It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end, the promises might be sure to all the seed.*

6. That beleivers might have strong consolation, notwithstanding of all the opposition of enemies without and within, when they see that now their life is hid with Christ in God Col. 3: 3. and that their life is in their Head: they will not feare so much

much devils and men without, nor their own dead and corrupt hearts within.

Thirdly, How inexcusable must all such be, (1.) Who will not lay hold on this life, on Jesus who is *the Life*, sure life, yea everlasting life?

(2.) Who seek life any other way, than by and through Him, who is *the Life*?

(3.) Who oppose this way of life, and not only reject the offers of it, but prove enemies to it, and to all that carry it, or preach it?

Fourthly, Here is strong encouragement to all, that would be at heaven, to enter into this gospel way, which is a way of life. Such need not fear that their Salvation shall not be throughed, let Satan and all their adversaryes do what they can, all that enter into this way shall live: for the way itself is life, and nothing but life. So that here all objections are obviated: life can answer all. If the believer fear, that he shall never win thorow difficulties, he shall die by the way, or by fainting, stumbling and swooning, dishonour the profession, and at length fall off and apostatize, or despair and give over all hope; Here is that, which may answer and obviate all; life can quicken, and who can perish in the way, which is the way of life, an enlivening way, yea the way, which is life itself, yea *the Life*, in a singular and eminent manner?

Fifthly, Here is ground of reproof even of believers. who, though they have come to Christ, yet do not live in Him, as they ought; do not walk in Him, with that liveness, activity, which is called for: but

1. Leane too much to their owne understanding, gifts, or graces; and think thereby to ride - out stormes, and to wade thorow all difficulties, whileas, if He who is *the Life*, do not breath upon us, all that will faile us, in the day of tryal: our understanding and paitts or gifts may drie up, and our graces may whither and decay, and goe backward.

2. Rest too much an duties; when they should in them goe to Him, who is *the Life*; for only in Him is life to be had, and Him should they seek to in the ordinances, that they might have life from Him, in those outward duties: and this appeareth in their way of going about duties, without that dependence on Him, & single eyeing of Him, which is called for; as also by their fretting and repining, when duties do not their business, as if life lay all in duties: and concludeing all will be right, because they get duties somewhat tolerably performed; and on the contrary desponding, when duties fall heavie on them, and they finde themselves indisposed for duty: all which clearly evinceth, that they lay too too much weight on duties; whileas it would be otherwayes with them, if they were purely depending on Christ, and looking for all from Him.

3. Desponde too soon, because they get not helpe and reliefe instantly; or because they are not preserved from every degree of fainting.

4. Neglect to make use of Him, and to come to Him, with all their wants, failings and necessities, as they ought: or come not with that freedome and boldnesse, which the gospel grounds allow.

Sixtly. This preacheth out the woful misery of such, as are strangers to Christ: for being strangers to *the Life*, they have no life, they are dead, and death is ingraven on all they do; even though

1. They should be very diligent in external duties, yea and outstripe many true beleevers; as the *pharisees* had their fasts twice a week. *Luk. 18.*

2. They should be eminently gifted, able to instruct others, and to speak of the mysteries of the gospel, to good purpose and to edification: for such gifts of knowledge and utterance may be, where the lively operations of the grace of Christ are not; and consequently, where Christ is not, *is the Life.*

3. They should seem eminent in all their outward carriage, and seem to carry most christianly in all their walk, and appeare most devout in the matter of worships.

4. And they should have something more than ordinary; even taste of the heavenly gift, & be made partakers of extraordinary gifts of the holy ghost, yea and taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come. *Heb. 6: 4, 5.*

Seventhly. This discovereth the noble advantage of such, as have accepted of Christ for their life. Their condition is happy, sure, desirable & thriving, for Christ is theirs, and life is theirs; because Christ, who is *the Life*, is theirs

Objection. 1. But some wicked person may say, we see not that happy and advantageous condition of such, as go for beleevers; for we observe them to be as little lively oftentimes, as others, and as unfit
for

for duties; yea and sometimes, as much subject to sin and corruption, as others.

Answer. 1. However it be with them, either in thine eyes, or possibly in their own, sometimes; yet thou may hold thy peace: for in their worst condition, they would not exchange with thee, for a world. In their deadeft-like condition, they are not voide of all life, as thou art, notwithstanding all thy motions, and seeming actiuenesse in duty, because all thy motion in and about duty is but like the moveing of childrens puppies, caused by external motives, such as a name, applause, peace from a natural conscience, or the like, and not from any inward principle of grace and life.

2. Howbeit they sometimes seem to be dead; yet they are not alwayes so; life doth really worke sometimes in them: whereas there was never any true or kindly motion of life in thee.

3. There may be more life in them, yea life in motion, when they seem to be overcome with some lusts or corruption, yea when really they are overcome; then beholders, that are strangers to the heart, can observe: for when temptation is violent, as having the advantage of the time & place, of the constitution of the body, and the like, it argueth no small degree of life, and of life in motion, to make some resistance and opposition thereunto, though at length he should be overcome thereby. And this opposition and resistance, flowing from a principle of grace, speaketh out life, though corruption, having the advantage, should at that time over-power the motion of life, and carry the man away.

4. If it be not otherwise with beleevers than is objected, they may blame themselves: for not improving Christ better for life.

Obj. 2. But some, who are true beleevers, will object the same, and cry out of themselves as dead; and say, they finde not that liveliness & activity in their souls, that will evidence Christ, *the Life*, dwelling and working in them.

Ans. It may be they prejudge themselves of that lively frame, they might enjoy, and so wronge themselves.

1. In not exercising faith on Christ, nor drawing life from Him through faith. The life which they live should be by faith *Gal. 2: 20*. How then can such as do not eat become fat? by faith we feed on Christ.

2. In not watching, but giving way to security, and thereby encouraging and strengthening the adversary, as we see in *David*: when they stand not on their watch towre, they invite Satan to set on; and he is vigilant enough, and knoweth how to take his advantage, and to improve his opportunity.

3. In giving way to leaziness and not stirring up themselves, as we see in the *Bride Cant. 3: 1. & 5: 3*. When they stirre not up the grace of God, which is in them, how can they be lively? If grace be laid by, it will contract rust. The best way to keep grace lively, is to keep it in exercise, how little so ever it be.

4. By their rashness, walking without feare, as is to be observed in *Peter*, when he slipped so foully. When through their want of circumspection,

spection, they precipitate themselves into danger, and cast themselves among their enemies hands, is it any wonder, that it goe not with them, as they would; and that they provock God to leave them to themselves, that they may know what they are, and learne afterward not to tempt the Lord, and to walk more circumspectly?

5. By leaning too much to their attainements, and not looking out for new influences of grace and life. Hereby they provock God to let them know to their expences, that for as great a length as they are come, they must live by faith, and be quickened by new influences from the Spirit of life.

6. So they may wronge themselves through their ignorance of Christ, and of the way of making use of Him: and if they, through unacquaintedness with Christ and the right way of improving the fulnesse that is in Him, misse the fruit and advantage, which otherwise they might have, they can only blame themselves.

7. They may also prejudge themselves, by their self love, self esteem, self seeking, self pleasing &c. which piece and piece will draw them off Christ, and cause them forget the way of sucking life from Him, who is the fountaine of life.

8. When they give way to small sins, they open a door for greater; and they lose thereby their tendernes, and so provock the Lord to withdraw: and this is another way, whereby they prejudge themselves of that benefite of liveness, which they might otherwise have.

9. So

9. So also by wordly mindednesse, which alienateth their minde from God: and.

10. By their impatience and fretting and repining against God; and his wise dispensations; they also preiudge and wrong themselves: for while they are in that mood, they can not, with due composednesse of Spirit, go to Christ, and draw life from Him through faith.

Obj. 3. But is there not even some of those, who are most tender, that compleane of their deadnesse and shortcomings?

Ans. 1. It may be that they complaine without cause, & that they have more cause of rejoycing. and of blessing the Lord, for what He hath done to them, than of complaineing.

2ly. Their complaineing will not prove the want of life, but the contrare rather; for when they complaine most, they must be most sensible, if their complaints be real, and not meerly for fashion; and sense is a manifest evidence of life.

3ly. It would be remembered, that the Lord can make their failings and shortcomings contribute to the furthering of their life; as we see it did in *Peter*.

4ly. It would also be remembered, that Christ doth not distribute and give out of this life to all his members and followers, in a like measure; but to some more, and to others lesse, according as He seeth it meet and convenient, both for his own glory and their good. He hath more service for some, than for others: and some He will imploy in greater and more difficult work, which will call for more

more life; and others He will imploy in common work, which will not call for such an eminent degree of life.

5ly. And upon the same account, He may think it good, to give to the same person a larger measure of grace at one time, than at another.

6ly. And that for wise reasons and noble ends, as

1. That all may see, how absolute He is in his dispensations: a Sovereigne, that doth with his owne what He will, and will not give an account of any of his wayes or communications, to us.

2. That we may learne submission, and quietly to stoupe before Him, whatever measure He be pleased to dispense towards us.

3. That we may learne, to depend upon Him, more closely all alongs; and in all our wayes to acknowledge Him.

4. That we may learne, to exercise patience, which must have its perfect work, in waiting upon Him, as a great king. This is his glory, and it is the testifying of our homage to Him.

5. He will traine us up so, as to be wel contented and satisfied, if He bring us home at length, though not with such a convey of the graces of his Spirit, as we would wish.

6. That we may see and read our dayly obligation to Christ our life, and the dayly need we have of his keeping our life in, by fresh galls of his Spirit, and new heavenly influences.

7. And that getting new proofs of his kindness and faithfulness, we may give Him new songs of praise

praise daylie and so expresse our thankfulnesse to Him, which will tend to set forth his glory.

Eightly. This may point out unto beleevers, several duties, to which they are called: we shall name some few of many; as

1. That they should *rejoyce*, and be comforted, in the thoughts of this, that they have such a complect Mediator, one that is thoroughly furnished, and made all things for them; not only *the Way*, and *the Tru b*; but *the Life* also.

2. The thoughts of this should also *stirre up* to *wondering* at the wisdom, graciousnesse and goodness of God; & to thankfulnesse for providing such an allsufficient way for them.

3. This should also *encourage* them under all temptations, faintings, backsets and fits of deadness, that they fall into, that there is one, who is *the Life*: and that He, whom their soul hath chosen, is *the Life*, and so fully able to quicken and enliven them.

4. This should teach them *humility*, and not to be proud of any thing they have, or do; for it is He, who is *the Life*, who keepeth them in life, and helpeth them to any duty; yea it is life, that worketh all in them.

5. And likewise it should teach them to *acknowledge Him*, to whom they are obliged, for any thing they do, for any life they have, or any acts or frutes of life that appeare in them; and to be *thankful* to Him therefore.

6. And mainly, They should here read their *obligation and duty*, to improve this advantage, and to draw life out of this fountaine, and so live by

this life; act and do all in and through this life; and so be quickened by this life, in all their fits of deadnesse: and for this cause would keep those things in minde,

(1.) That they should live in a constant conviction of their own weaknesse, deadnesse and inability to do any acts of life, of themselves; and far lesse to recover themselves out of any distemper and fit of deadnesse, which they fall into.

(2.) That they should live in the faith of this. That there is life enough in Him, who is *the Life*, to do their businesse. They should be perswaded of His aliusufficiency.

(3.) That He is not only an aliusufficient deliverer, able to deliver a soul, that is, as it were, rotting in the grave, and to cause the dead to heare his voice and live; but also most willing and ready to answer them, in all their necessities, according to wisdom, and as He seeth it is for his glory, and their souls advantage. The faith of this is necessary, and will be very encouraging.

(4.) That they should go to Him, how deadlike so ever their condition be, and by faith roll their dead case upon Him, who is *the Life*.

(5.) That they should pray upon the promises of grace and influence, even out of the belly of hell, out of the grave, with *Jonah* Cap. 2: 1. for He is faithful and true, and tender-hearted, and will heare and give a good answer at length.

(6.) That in the exercise of faith and prayer, they should waite with patience, till He be pleased to come, and breath upon the dry bones, and till the seed of righteousness arise on their souls, with healing in his wings.

314 How to make use of Christ,

But of this more particularly, in the following cases, which now we come to speak a little unto, of purpose to cleare up more fully, how the beleever is to make use of Christ, as *the Life*, when he is under some one distemper or other, that calleth for life and quickening from Christ *the Life*. We cannot handledistinctly all the particular cases, which may be brought under this head, it will suffice for clearing of this great duty, to speak to some few.

C H A P. XXI.

How to make use of Christ as the Life, when the beleever is so sitten-up in the wayes of God, that he can do nothing.

Sometimes the beleever is under such a distemper of weaknesse and deadnesse, that there is almost no commanded duty, that he can go about with his heart and all is so dead, that he cannot so much as groan under that deadnesse. Yea he may be under such a decay, that little or no difference will be observed betwixt him and others, that are yet in nature; and be not only unable to go actively and lively about commanded duties, yea or to wattle from under that deadnesse; but also be so decayed that he shall scarce have any effectual desire or longing to be out of that condition. Now in speaking to the usemaking of Christ, for quickening in this dead case, we shall do these things

1. For clearing of the case, we shall shew how probably it is brought on.

2. How Christ is life to the soul in such a case, at this.

3. How the beleever is to make use of Christ for life, in this case, and,

4. Further cleare the matter, by answering a question or two.

As to the first. Such a distemper as this may be brought upon the soul,

1. Through some strong and violent temptation, from without, meeting with some evil disposition of the heart within, and so surprizing & overpowering the poor soul, as we see in David, & Peter.

2. Through the cunning and slight of Satan, teasing the beleever, that is not watchful enough, sensibly off his feet, and lulling him asleep by degrees.

3. Through carelesnesse, in not adverting at first to the beginnings and first degrees of this deadnesse and uprising, when the heart beginneth to grow formal, and superficial in duties, and to be satisfied with a perfunctorious performance, without life and sense.

4. Through thortureing of conscience, in light and smaller matters; for this may provock God to let conscience fall a sleep, & so the soul shall become more untender, and scruple little, at length, at greater matters; and thus deadnesse may come to the sight, God ordering it so, for a further punishment to them, for their untendernesse and uncircumspectnesse.

5. Through their not stirring up themselves, and shaking off that Spirit of lazinesse and drouinesse, when it first ceaseth upon them; but, with the sluggard, yet another slumber, & another sleep, and a folding of the hands to sleep.

6. Continuing in some known sin, and not repenting of it, may bring on this distemper, as may be observed in *David*.

As to the *Second* particular; Christ is life to the soul in this case; in that

1. He keepeth possession of the soul: for the seed remaineth, the root abideth fast in the ground, there is life still at the heart, though the man make no motion; like one in a deep sleep, or in a swoon, yet life is not away.

2ly. He in due time awakenerh, and rouseth up the soul, & so recovereth it out of that condition, by one meane or other, either by some alarme of judgment and terror, as He did *David*; or dispensation of mercy and tenderness, as He did *Peter*. And usually He recovereth the soul

1. By discovering something of this condition, by giving so much sense and knowledg; and sending so much light, as will let the soul see, that it is not well, and that it is under that distemper of lifelesness.

2. By discovering the dreadfulnes of such a condition, and how hazardous it is to continue therein.

3. By putting the soul in minde, that He is the Life, and the resurrection; and through the stirring up of grace stirring the soul to look to Him for quickening and outgate.

4. By fawning up the soul at length out of that drouziness, and sluggish folding of the hands to sleep, and out of that deep security; and putting it into a more lively, vigilant and active frame.

As to the *Third*. The believer, that would make use of Christ, for a recovery out of this condition, would minister these duties.

1. He would look to Christ, as the *light* of Men, and the enlightener of the blinde; to the end, he may get a better and a more through discovery of of his condition; for it is halfe health here to be sensible of this disease. The soul that is once brought to sense, is halfe recovered of this seaver and lethargie.

2. He would eye Christ, as *God*, able to raise the dead and dry bones to live, as *Ezech. 37.* and this will keep from despondency and despair; yea it will make the poor believer conceive hope, when he seeth that his phylician is God, to whom nothing is impossible.

3. He would look to Him also, as *Head* and *Husband*; an *Life* to the poor soul, that adhereth to Him; and this will strengthen his hope & expectation: for he will see, that Christ is ingadged, to speak so, in point of honour, to quicken a poor dead and lifeless member, for the life in the head is for the good of the whole body, and of every member of the body, that is not quite cut off: and the good that is in the husband is forthcoming for the reliefe of the poor wife, that hath not yet gotten a bill of divorce. And Christ, being *Life* to the *Life*, he must be appointed for the reliefe, the quickening, & recovering from death of such as are given to Him, that they may

be finally raised up at the last day, He must present all his members lively in that day.

4. He would by faith wrappe himself up in the promises, and lie before this Sun of righteousness, till the heat of his beames thaw his frozen heart, and bring warmth into his cold and dead soul, and thus renew his grips of Him, accepting of Him, as the Life, and as his Life. Christ himself tells us *Iohn. 6: 40. That this is the Fathers will, that bath sent Him, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, might have everlasting life, and He will raise him up at the last day.* Faith closing with Him, as it was the meane of life at first, so will it be the mean of recovery out of a dead distemper, afterward.

5. He would mourne for such sins and provocations, as he discovereth in himself to have caused and brought on this distemper. Repentance and godly sorrow for such evils, as have sinned Christ and life away, is a way to bring life back againe.

6. He would be sure to harbour no known sin in his soul, but to set himself against every known evil, as an enemy to the life and recovery, which he is seeking,

7. He must waite on Christ his Life, in the appointed meanes: for that is the will of the Lord, that He should be waited upon there, and sought for there. There is little hopes of recovery for such, as lay aside the ordinances. Though the ordinances without him cannot revive or quicken a poor soul; yet if He hath condescended so far as to come with life to his people, in and through the ordinances, and hath appointed us to waite for Him there, we must

must be willing to accept of all his condescensions of love, and seek him and waite for Him there, where He hath said, He will be found.

8. In going about those ordinances of life, He would beware of putting them in Christ's room: that is, He would beware of, thinking, that ordinances will do his business: as some ignorantly do, who think that by praying so often a day, and reading so much, and hearing so much, they shall recover their lost lively frame, when (alas!) all the ordinances without Him signifie nothing. They, without Him, are cold and lifeless, and can never bring heat or warmth to a cold soul. It is He in the ordinances whom they are to seek, and from whom alone life is to be expected, and none else.

9. Though livelyeth not in the ordinances, as separated from Christ, and life is to be expected from Him alone; yet he would beware of going about the ordinances in a careless, superficial and indifferent manner: for this will argue little desire after life, and will bring on more deadness. The ordinances than should be gone about seriously, diligently, and with great carefulness, yea with such earnestness, as if life were to be had in them; and yet with such a single and pure dependence on Christ for life, as if we were not about the ordinances at all. This is the right way of going about ordinances.

10. He must in all this waite with patience, without fretting or quarrelling with Him, for his delaying to come. He must waite with much humility. It becometh not him, who hath, through his folly, sinned life away to quarrel now with God,
O 4 because

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because he restoreth him not againe to life, at the first asking. He may be glade if at length, after long seeking, waiting and much diligence, He come and restore to him the joy of his salvation, and if he be not made to lie as a bedrid all his dayes, for a monument of folly, in sinning away his life, strength and legs, as he did.

11. He must beware of giving way to any thing, that may increase or continue this deadnesse, such as untendernesse in his walk, unwatchfulnesse, negligence and carelesnesse; and especially he must beware to provock God, by sinning against light.

12. He would also beware of limiteing the Lord to any set measure of life and strength: for it becometh not beggers to be carvers; far lesse such beggers, as through folly have sinned away a good portion. It was not fit for the prodigal to seek a new patrimony, after he had dilapidated the former, it might suffice him to be made as a servant.

13. He would use well any small measure of life he getteth, for God and his glory; getteth he but one talent he should use it, that he may gain thereby: use (we say) limbs and have limbs, use strength and have it. This will be the way to get more.

14. He would be taking on the vows of the Lord, and that in the Lord, to walk more watchfully in time coming, charging all within and without not to surre or provoke the Lord to depart further, or to scatte Him from coming to the soul.

As to the last particular.

If it be enquired. 1. What can that soul do, that is not sensible of this deadnesse and weaknesse?

Ans.

Ans. Though there be not any real sense or feeling of this condition; yet there may be a suspicion, that all is not right: and if this be, the soul must look out to Christ, for the life of sense, and for a sight of the provocations, that have brought on that condition. He that is *the Life* must recover the very beginnings of life: and when the soul winneth to any real apprehension and sense of this deadnesse, it must follow the course formerly prescribed, for a recovery.

2. But it will be asked, How a soul can act faith in such a case? And if it cannot act faith, how can it come to Christ, and make use of Him?

Answers. It is true, while the soul is in that case, it cannot act a strong and a lively faith; yet it can act a weak and a sickly faith: and a weak and sickly faith can lay hold upon an enlivening Christ, and so bring in more strength and life to the soul. If the soul be so weak, as that it cannot gripe; yet it can look to Him, that can quicken the dead, and hath helped many a poor soul before, out of a dead condition. Or if it cannot do so much as look, yet it may give an half-look, and lie before Him, who waiteth to be gracious; and sustaine it self, if it can get no more, with a *may be* He shall come.

3. But further it will be asked, what the soul can do, when after all this, it findeth no helpe or supply, but deadnesse remaining, yea and, it may be, growing?

Ans. The soul in that case must lye at his door, waiting for his salvation; and resolving, if no better may be, to die at his door; and leave no approved mean, or commanded duty, unessayed, that it may

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recover its former vigour, activity and strength. And while the beleever is waiting thus, he is at his duty; and this may yeeld him peace, and he may be sure that he shall never be ashamed Ps. 25: 3. & 69: 6. Esai. 30: 18.

C H A P. XXII.

How Christ is to be made use of for life, in case of heartlesnesse and fainting, through discouragements.

THere is another evil and distemper, which beleivers are subject to, and that is a case of fainting through manifold discouragements, which make them so heartlesse, that they can do nothing, yea and to sit up, as if they were dead. The question then is. How such a soul shall make use of Christ, to the end it may be freed from that first fainting, and win over those discouragements for satisfaction to which, we shall

1. Name some of those discouragements, which occasion this.
2. Show what Christ hath done, to remove all those discouragements.
3. Show how the soul should make use of Christ for life, in this case; and
4. Adde a few words of caution.

As to the first. There are several things, which may give occasion to this distemper; we shall name those few.

1. The sense of a strong, active, lively, and con-

continually stirring body of death, and that notwithstanding of meanes used to beare it down, and to kill it. This is very discouraging: for it made *Paul* cry out *woes me miserable man, who shall deliver me from this body of death, Rom. 7: 24.* It is a most discouraging thing, to be still fighting, and yet getting no ease, let be victory; to have to do with an enemy, that abides alwayes alike strong, fight and oppose as we will, yea not only is not weakened far lesse overcome, but that groweth in power and prevaieth. And this many times affecteth the heart of God's children, and causeth them to faint.

2. It may be the case of some, that they are assaulted with strange temptations of Satan, his buffetings, that are not usual. This made *Paul* cry out thrice, *1 Cor. 12.* and if the Lord had not told him, that His grace was sufficient for him, what would he have done? Hence some of his cry out, in their complaint, was there ever any so tempted, so assaulted with the devil, as I am? Sure, this dispensation cannot but be much afflicting, sadning and discouraging.

3. The sense of the real weakness of grace under lively meanes, and notwithstanding of their serious and earnest desires, and endeavours after growth in grace, cannot but disquiet and discourage them: for they may readily conclude, that all their paines and labour shall be in vaine, for any thing they can observe.

4. The want of sensible incomes of joy and comfort, is another fainting and discouraging dispensation; as the feeling of these is a heart-strengthening

ing and most encourageing thing, which made *David* so earnestly cry for it *Psal.* 51: 8, 12. when a poor soul, that hath the testimony of its own conscience, that it hath been, in some measure of singleness of heart and honesty, seeking the face of God, for a good many yeers, and yet cannot say, that ever it knew what those incomes of joy and comfort meane, which some have tasted largely of, it cannot choose but be discouraged, and much call down, as not knowing what to say of it self, or how to judge of its owne case.

5. The want of access in their addresses to God, is another heart - discouraging thing. They go about the duty of prayer, with that measure of earnestness and uprightnes of heart, that they can win at, at least this is their aime and endeavour, and yet they meet with a fast - closed door: when they cry & shout, he shooteth out their prayer; as the Church complaineth *Lament.* 3: 8. This sure will affect them deeply, and cause their hearts sometimes to faine.

6. The want of freedom and liberry in their addresses to God, is another thing, which causeth sorrow and fainting. They go to pray, but their tongue cleaveth to the roof of their mouth; they are straitned, and cannot get their hearts vented.

7. Outward persecution, that attendeth the way of godliness, and afflictions, that accompany such as live godly, is another discourageing thing, both to themselves, who are under afflictions; and to others, who heare it and see it; wherefore the Apostle desired earnestly, that the *Epheſians* should not faint at his tribulation, *Cap.* 3: 13.

8. The Lords sharpe and sore dispensations for sin, as toward *David Psal. 51.* or out of his So-
veraignty for tryal and other ends, as toward *Iob*, is
likewise a discouraging heart-breaking thing; and
that which will make strong gyants to roare and
fainte, and look upon themselves as dead men, as
we see in these two eminent men of God.

As to the second thing. Christ is life to the belee-
ver, in this case, in having done that which in
reason may support, under all these discouragements,
and having done so much for removing or weaken-
ing of these; yea and for carrying them over
them all, which may be in a word cleared, as to
each.

1. As for the body of death. Let it stirre in the
beleever, as fast as it will, or can, it is already killed, &
all that struggling is but like the struggling of a man in
the pangs of death; for our old man is crucified with
Christ, *Rom. 6: 6.* and the beleever is dead to sin,
and risen legally with him, *Col. 2: 11, 12. & 3: 3.*
But of this we spoke abundance above.

2. As to Satans troubling the poor beleever.
Through Christ also he is a vanquished enemy. He
hath overcome him that had the power of death, even
the devil, *Heb. 2: 14.*

3. As for that felt weakness of grace. That is
no ground of discouragement, so long as he liveth,
who can make the lame to leap as an hart, and can
make waters break out in the wilderneffe, and strea-
mes in the desert. *Eesai. 35: 6, 7.* and giveth power
to the faine, and to them that have no might increa-
seth strength: so that such as waite upon the Lord
shall renew their strength, and they shall mount up
with

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with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint, Esai. 40: 29, 31. For in Him are all the promises yea & amen, 2 Cor. 1: 20. So that they need not faint upon this account, nor be discouraged: for the work He hath begun, He will finish it, and He will quicken in the way, *Psal. 119: 37.*

4. As for the want of sensible incomes of joy and comfort: He hath promised to send the comforter, in his own good time, *Iohn. 14: 26. & 15: 26. as one whom his mother comforteth, so will he comfort his, Esai. 66. 13.* Joy and gladnesse is promised in the covenant, *Ier. 31: 13.* But further, though He keep up those influences of joy and comfort, He supporteth another way. The lively hope of heaven may bear up the heart, under all this want: for there shall the soul have fulnesse of joy and pleasures for ever more: no teares, nor sorrow there, *Psal. 16: 11. Esa. 35: 10. & 51: 11.*

5. As for the want of accessse in their prayers. They may possibly blame themselves, for He hath by his merites opened the door; and is become (to speak so) master usher to the poor soul, to lead him in to the Father, so that *by him we have accessse, Ephes. 2: 18.* yea boldnesse and accessse, *through faith in Him Ephes. 3: 12.* and He is our advocat *1 Iohn. 2: 1.* and as our attornay is gone to heaven before us; and there liveth for ever to make intercession *Heb. 6: 20. & 7: 25.* And what is there more to be done, to procure us accessse? or to move & encourage us to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtaine mercy, and finde grace to help in time of need? *Heb. 4: 14, 16.*

6: As

6. As to that want of freedome and liberty in prayer: He helpeth that also: for He maketh the dumb to sing, *Esa. 35: 6.* and maketh the tongue of the stammerers to be ready to speak elegantly, *Esa. 32: 4.* He can enlarge the heart, and help the soul to pour out its heart before God.

7. As to outward persecution: He can easily taketh that discouragement away, by giving the hundredfold with it: by supporting under it, and bringing saife thorow it: when his presence is with them through fire and water, *Esa. 43: 2.* what can trouble them? and when he maketh their consolations abound, *2 Cor. 1: 5.* what can discourage them? Have not his sung in the very fires? and rejoyced in all their afflictions? The resting of the Spirit of God and of glory, which Peter speaketh of, *1 Pet. 4: 14.* is comfortable enough.

8. As for all those sharpe dispensations, mentioned in the last place: He, having taken the sting of all, even of death, away, by taking away sin, and purchased the blessing and love of the Father, having made reconciliation through his blood, all those dispensations flow from love, even such as seem sharpest, being inflicted for sin, as we see *Heb. 12: 6.*

So that there is no cause here of fainting, or of being so discouraged, as to give over the matter. But for helpe in this case, there should be an use making of Jesus, as *the Life*; and that is

The third thing, which we shall speak a little to, viz. How the soul should make use of Christ, as *the Life*, to the end it may be delivered from this fainting, occasioned through manifold discouragements,

1. The beleever in this case would minde the covenant of Redemption, wherein Christ hath promised, and so standeth obliged and engaged, to carry on his own through all discouragements, to the end; so that if any one beleever miscarry, Christ loseth more than they can lose: for the beleever can but lose his soul, but Christ shall lose his glory, and this is more worth, than all the souls that ever were created. And further, not only shall Christ lose his glory, as Redeemer; But the Father shall also lose his glory, in not making good his promise to Christ his Son: for by the same covenant, He standeth engaged to carry thorow all the seed, that Christ hath died for. And his appointing Christ to be his servant for this end, and choosieing Him from among all the folk, and his upholding of Him, consueing with him, delighting in Him, and promising that He shall bring forth judgment to the gentiles, and that, to victory, or to truth, speak our His engagment to see all true beleevers brought home. See *Esai.* 42: 1, 2, 3, 4. *Mat.* 12: 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. *Psal.* 89: 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 35, 36, 37. Sure, the faith of this would support the poor beleever, under all those discouragements.

2. They would minde likewise the covenant of Grace, wherein all things are contrived and laid downe, so as that the beleever may have abundant consolation and comfort, in all cases; and whereas there is enough to take away all cause of fainting & discouragement: as might fully be made to appear, if any did questione it.

3. They would remember how richly Christ is furnished, with all qualifications, suiteing even that

that case, wherein they are like to be overwhelmed with discouragements: and could the beleever but think upon, and beleve those three things, he might be kept up under all discouragements *first*. That Christ is a compassionate tender-hearted mediator, having bowels more tender, than the bowels of any mother; so that *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax* Esai. 42: 3. He had compassion on the very bodies of the multitude, that followed him; and would not let them go away fasting, lest they should fainte in the way, *Mat. 15: 32. Mark. 8: 3.* and will He not have compassion on the soules of his followers, when like to faint through spiritual discouragements? *Secondly*. That He hath power and authority to command all things, that can serve to array-on a poor beleever: for all power in Heaven and Earth is given to Him; all things are made subject to Him. *Thirdly*. That He hath a great readinesse and willingnesse, upon many accounts, to helpe his followers in their necessities. Sure, were these three firmly believed, the beleever could not faint, having Christ, who is tender and loving & willing to helpe, and withall able to do what he will, to look to, and to run to, for supply.

4. They would take up Christ, under all his heart-strengthening, and soul comforting relations, as a tender Brother, a careful Shepherd, a fellow-feeling Highpriest, a loving Husband, a sympathizing Head, a life-communicating Root, an allsufficient King &c. any one of which is enough to beare up the head, and comfort the heart of a drooping, discouraged and fainting soul: much more may
all

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all of them yeeld strong consolation, to support & revive a soul, staggering and fainting. through discouragement. Oh! if wee could but rightly improve, and dwell upon the thoughts of these comforting and heart-quickenning relations! our hearts would not fail us, so much as they do.

5. They would eye Him, as now in glory, who, as Head and Captaine of salvation, hath wrestled through, and overcome all difficulties and discouragements, that were in his way, and in name and behalf of all beleivers, that are his followers, and members of his body, is now possessed of glory, and thence draw an heart-comforting, and soul-strengthening conclusion, thus. Is He entered into glory as Head, than such a poor faint-hearted, heart-broken, discouraged worme, as I am, may at length come there, as a little bit of his body, especially since He said, that seeing He liveth all we shall live also, *Ioh. 14: 19.*

6. They would remember how Christ, who was alwayes heard of his Father, *Iohn. 11: 41, 42.* did supplicat for this, as Mediator and Intercessor for his people *Iohn. 17: 24.* saying, *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am, &c.* May not the poor faint-hearted, believer, that is looking to Iesus, draw an heart-reviving & soul-encouraging conclusion out of this, & say, Though my prayers be shote out, and when I cry for reliefe under my discouragements, I get no hearing; but, on the contrary, my discouragements grow, and my heart fainteth the more; yet Christ alwayes was heard, and the Father will not say Him nay, why then may I not lift up my head in

hope

hope, and sing in the hope of the glory of God,
in the midst of all my discouragements?

7. By faith they would cast all their discouragements, entanglements, and difficulties, as bur-
dens, too heavy for their back, on Christ, and
leave them there with Him; who only can remove
them; and withal resolve never to give over, but
to go forward in his strength, and thus become dayly
stronger and stronger in resolutions, purposes,
desires and endeavours, when they can do no
more.

8. They would look to Jesus, the author and
finisher of faith, and set Him before them, as a copie
of courage, who, for the joy, that was set before Him,
endured the crosse, despising the shame, and en-
dured contradiction of sinners against himself Heb.
12, 3. and this may prove a meane to keep us
from wearrying and fainting in our mindes, as the
apostle hinteth there.

9. They would remember, that Christ, going
before, as the Captaine of salvation, hath broken
the way to them, and the force and strength of all
those discouragements, as we did lately show; so
that now they should be looked upon, as broken &
overlesse discouragements.

10. They would fix their eye by faith on Iesus, as
able to do their businesse, to beare up their
sides, to carry them thorow discouragements, to
be cordials to their fainting hearts; and remaine
in that posture and resolution, looking for
strengthening and encouraging life from Him, &
from Him alone: and thus declare that 1. They
are unable in themselves to stand out such storms
of

of discouragements, and to wrestle thorow such difficulties. 2. They beleeve, He is only able to beare them up, and carry them thorow, & make them to despise all those discouragements, which the Bevil and their own evil hearts muster up against them. 3. That, come what will come, they will not quite the bargaine, they will never recal or take back their subscription and consent to the covenant of grace, and to Christ as theirs, offered them, though they should die, and die againe, by the way. 4. That they would faine be kept on in the way, and helped forward, without failing and fainting by the way. 5. That they cannot run thorow hard wals, they cannot do impossibilities, they cannot break thorow such mighty discouragements. 6. That yet through Him, they can do all things. 7. That He must helpe, or they are gone, and shall never win thorow all these difficulties and discouragements, but shall one day either die by the hand of *Saul*. 8. That they waite earnestly seeking helpe from Him, cry for it, and looking for it, and resolve never to give over, and if they be disappointed, they are disappointed.

Now for the last particular. The word of exhortation. Take these.

1. They would not think to be altogether free of fainting: for there is no perfection here, and there is much flesh and corruption remaining, which will occasion fainting.

2. Nor would they think to be free of all causes and occasions of this fainting, viz. the discouragements formerly mentioned, or the

for, if the devil can do any thing, he will work discouragements, both within and without. So that they would lay their resolution to meet with discouragements; for few or none ever went to heaven, but they had many a storme in their face, and they must not think to have a way paved for themselves alone.

3. They would not pore too much, nor dwell too long and too much upon the thoughts of those discouragements: for that is Sarans advantage, & tendeth to weaken themselves. But it were better to be looking beyond them, as Christ did *Heb. 12: 2.* when he had the crosse and the shame to wrestle with, He looked to the joy that was set before Him; and that made Him endure the crosse, and despise the shame: and as *Moses* did *Heb. 11: 25, 26, 27.* when he had afflictions, and the wrath of the King to wrestle against, He had respect unto the recompence of the reward, and so he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

4. They would remember, that as Christ hath tender bowells, and is full of compassion, and is both ready & able to helpe them, so is He wise, & knoweth how to let out his mercies best. He is not like a foolish affectionate mother, that would hazard the life of the childe, before she put the childe to any paine. He seeth what is best for his owne glory, and for their good, here and hereafter; & that He will do, with much tendernes & readinesse.

5. They would look upon it, as no mean mercy, if, notwithstanding of all the discouragements, and stormes that blow in their face, they are helped to keep

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keep their face up the hill, & are fixed in this resolution, never willingly to turne their back upon the way of God ; but to continue creeping forward, as they may, whatever stormes they meet with : yet upon this account, ought they heartily to blasse his name, and to rejoyce ; for *their hearts shall live that seek Him*, Psal. 22: 26.

6. They would remember, for their encouragement, that as many have been helped thorow all discouragements, & have been brought home at length, so may they be brought thorow all these stormes, which now they wrestle with. It is the glory of the Mediator to bring his brocken, torne & sincking vessels saife to shore.

Now I come to a *third* case, & that is

C H A P. XXIII.

How to make use of Christ as the Life, when the soul is dead, as to duty.

Sometime the beleever will be under such a distemper, as that he will be as unfit & unable for discharging of any commanded duty, as a dead man, or one in a swoon, is to work or go a journey : & it were good to know how Christ should be made use of, as *the Life*, to the end the diseased soul may be delivered from this : for this cause, we shall consider those foure things,

1. See what are the several steps & degrees of this distemper.

2. Consider

2. Consider whence it cometh, or what are the causes or occasions thereof.

3. Consider how Christ is life to the soul, in such a dead case: &

4. Point out the way of the souls usemaking of Christ, that would be delivered herefrom.

As to the first. This distemper cometh-on by several steps & degrees: it will be sufficient to mention some of the maine & most remarkable steps; such as,

1. There is a falling from our watchfulness & tenderness: & when we leave our watchtoure, we invite & encourage Satan to set upon us; as was said before.

2. There is going about duty but in a lazie way, when we love & seek after carnal ease, and seek out wayes of doing the duty, so as may be least troublesome to the flesh; as the Spouse did, *Cant. 3: 1.* when she sought her beloved upon her bed.

3. There is a lying by, & not stirring up ourselves to an active way of going about duty, of which the Prophet complaineth, *Eesai. 64: 7.* when he sayeth, *there is none that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.*

4. There is a giving way to spiritual drouzinesse, & upstirring in duties, & in the wayes of God. *I sleep* (said the Spouse *Cant. 5: 2, 3.*) *& I have put off my coat &c.* She knew she was not right, but was drouzie, & yet she did not shake it off, but composed herself for it, tooke off her coat, & washed her feet, & so lay downe to sleep.

5. There is a satisfaction and contentment with his condition, as thinking we are pretty well; at least

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least, for that time; and thus was the spouse in that forementioned place led away, she was so far from being dissatisfied with her condition, that she rather expresseth her contentment therewith.

6. There may be such a love to such a condition, & such a satisfaction in it, as that they may shift every thing, that hath a tendency to rouse them up out of that sluggish lazinesse, as not loving to be awakened out of their sleep. So we see the Bride shew & putteth off Christ's call & invitation to her, to arise & open to Him.

7. Yea, there is a defending of that condition, as, at least, tollerable & none of the worst; a justifying of it; or, at least, a pleading for themselves & excusing the matter, & covering over their neglect of duty with faire pretexts, as the Spouse did, when she answered Christ's call, with this, that she had washed her feet & might not defile them againe.

8. Yea further, there is a pleading for this ease, by alledging an impossibility to get it helped, as matters now stand; or at least, they will muster up insuperable-like difficulties, in their own way of doing duty, as the sluggard will say, that there is a lyon in the way: & the Spouse alledged she could not put on her coat againe.

9. Yea, it may come yet higher, even to a peremptour refusing to set about the duty: for what else can be read out of the Brides carriage, than that she would not rise, and open to her beloved?

10. There is also a desperate laying the duty aside, as supposing it impossible to be got done,

and so a resolute laying of it by as hopelesse, and as a businesse, they need not trouble themselves with it, because they will not get it throughed.

11. And hence floweth an utter indisposition, & unfitnesse for duty.

12. Yea, and in some it may come to this bieght, that the thoughts of going about any commanded duty, especially of worships, either in publick or private; or their minding, and attempting to set about it, shall fill them with terrour and affrightment, that they shall be constrained to forbear, yea to lay aside all thoughts of going about any such duty.

This is a very dead-like condition, what can be the causes or occasions thereof;

I answer. (And this is the *Second* particular) Some, or all of those things may be considered, as laying a hand in this.

1. No care to keep up a tender frame of heart, and growing slack, loose and carelesse, in going about christian duties, may bring on such a disorder.

2. Slighting of challenges for omission of duties, and leaving duties over the belly of conscience, may make way for such an evil.

3. Giving way to carnality and formality in duties, is a ready meane to usher in this evil: for when the soul turns carnal or formal, in the discharge of duties, duties have not that spiritual luster, which they had, & the soul becometh the sooner wearied of them, as seeing no such deireablenesse in them, nor advantage by them.

4. When people draw themselves in the cares of

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the world; they occasion this deadnesse to themselves: for then duties not onely are not gone about heartily, but they are looked on as a burden, and the man becometh weary of them; and from that he cometh to neglect them; and by continuing in the neglect of them, he contracteth an aversion of heart from them; & then an utter unfitnessse and indisposition, for discharging of them followeth.

5. Satan hath an active hand here driving on with his crafts and wiles from one steppe to another.

6. The hand also of a Sovereigne God is to be observed here, giving way to this, yea and ordering matters in his justice and wisdom so, as such persons shall come under such an indisposition, and that for wise and holy ends, as 1. That by such a dispensation he may humble them; who possibly were puffed up before, as thinking themselves fit enough to go about any duty, how difficult or hazardous soever, as *Peter*, who boasted of his own strength, as he thought nothing to lay down his life for Christ, and to die with him; and yet at length came to that, that he could not, or durst not, speak the truth before a damsel. 2. That He may punish one spiritual sin with another. 3. To give warning to all to watch, and pray, and to worke out their salvation with fear and trembling, and not to be high minded but feare. 4. That thereby, in his just and righteous judgment, He may lay a stumbling block before some, to the breaking of their neck, when they shall, for his cause, reject and mock at all religion. 5. That He may give proof at length of his admirable will

recovering from such a distemper, that no flesh might have ground to despaire, in the most dead condition. they can fall into. 6. And to show sometimes, what a Sovereigne dispensator of life He is, and how free He is in all his favours.

As to the *third* particular. How Christ is Life, in this case?

We *answere*. 1. By keeping possession of the believer, even when he seemeth to be most dead; and keeping life at the root, when there is neither scute appearing, nor flourish, and hardly many greene leaves, to evidence life.

2. By blowing at the coal of grace in the soul, in his own time and way, and putting an end to the winter, and sending the time of the singing of the birds, a spring - time of life.

3. By loosening the bands, with which he was held fast formerly, enlarging the heart with desires to go about the duty; so that now he willingly riseth up out of his bed of security, and cheerfully shaketh off his drouthe, and sluggishness, and former unwillingness; and now with willingness, and cheerfulness he setteth about the duty.

4. By sending influences of life and strength into the soul, whereby the wheels of the soul are made to run with ease, being oyled with those divine influences.

5. And this he doth by touching the heart, and wakening it by his Spirit, as He raised the Spouse out of her bed of security and leaziness, by putting in his hand by the hole of the door, then were her bowels moved for Him, *ant. 5: vers. 4.* and thus He setteth faith on work againe, having the

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key of *David* to open the heart; *Revel. 3. ver. 7.*

6. By giving a discovery of the evil of their former wayes and courses, He workerh up the heart to godly sorrow and remorse, for what is done, making their bowels more for grief and sorrow, that they should have so dishonoured and grieved Him.

7. By setting the soul thus on work to do, what formerly it neither could, nor would do; and thus He maketh the soul *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, *Eph. 6: 10.* and able to run and not be weary, and to walk and not be faint; *Esai. 40.*

8. By discovering the great recompence offered that is comeing, and the great help they have at hand, in the Covenant and promises thereof, and in Christ, their Head and Lord: He maketh the burden light, and the duty easie.

As to the *Last* particular viz: How a beleever in such a case should make use of Christ, as the *Life*, that he may be delivered therefrom?

When the poor beleever is any way sensible of this decay, and earnestly desiring to be from under that power of death, and in case to go about commanded duties, he would

1. Look to Christ for enlightened eyes, that he may get a more through discovery of the hazard & wretchednesse of such a condition, that hereby being awakened and alarmed, he may more willingly use the meanes of recovery, and be more willing to be at some paines to be delivered.

2. He would run to the blood of Jesus, to get the guilt of his bygone sinful wayes washed away, and

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and blotted out; to the end he may obtaine the favour of God, and get his reconciled face shining upon him againe.

3. He would eye Christ, as a Prince exalted to give repentance, that so his sorrow for his former sinful courses, may be kindly, spiritual, through and affecting the heart. He would cry to Christ, that He would put in his hand by the hole of the door, that his bowels may become moved for Him.

4. He would also look to Him, as that good Shepherd, who will strengthen that which is sick, *Exesh. 34: 16.* And take notice also of his other Relations, and of his Obligations thereby, and by the Covenant of Redemption; and this will strengthen his hope.

5. He would lay hold on Christ as his Strength, whereby his feet may be made like hindes feet, and he may be made to walk upon his high places, *Habb. 3: 19.* and he would gripe to that promise, *Eesai. 41: 10.* *I will strengthen thee;* and lay hold on Christ in it.

6. Having done thus, he would set about every commanded duty, in the strength of Jesus, looking to Him for help and supply, from whom cometh all his strength: and though he should not finde that help and assistance, which he expected, yet he would not be discouraged, but continue, and when he can do no more offer himself, as ready and willing to go about the duty, as if he had strength.

7. He would lye open to, and be ready to receive the influences of strength, which He, who is the Head, shall think good to give, in his own time

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manner and measure: and this taketh in those duties:

1. That they would carefully guard against the evils formerly mentioned, which brought on this distemper; such as Carelesse, Untenderne, Unwatchfulne, Lazynesse, carnal Security, Formality, and want of Seriousnesse, &c.

2. That they would beware of giving way to despondency, or of concluding the matter hopelessse, and remedilessse: for that is both discouraging to the soul, and a tempting provocation of God.

3. That they should be exercising the grace of patient Waiting.

4. That they should be waiting, in the use of the appointed meanes, and thereby, as it were, rubbing the dead and cold member before the fire, till it gather warmth.

5. That they should be keeping all their sails up, waiting for the gale of the Spirit, that should make their shipsail.

6. That they should be looking to Him alone, who hath promised that quickening Spirit; and patiently waiting his leisure, not limiting Him to any definite time.

7. That they should be cherishing and stirring up any small beginnings that are.

8. That they should be welcoming most cheerfully every motion of the Spirit, and improving every advantage of that kinde, and striking the yron when it is hote, and hold the wheels of the soul a going, when they are once put in motion, and so be loath to grieve the good and holy Spirit of God,

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Ephes. 4: vers. 30. or to quench his motions. 1
Thes. 5: vers. 19.

If these duties were honestly minded and gone about, in Him, and in His strength; none can tell, how soon there might be a change wrought in the soul.

But of it be asked, what such can do, to whom the very thoughts of the duty, and aiming at it is matter of terror.

Ans. It may be something, if not much, of that may flow from such a bodily distemper, as occasioneth the alteration of the body, upon the through apprehension of any thing, that is weighy and of moment, so as they cannot endure to be much affected with any thing: But leaving this to others, I would advise such a soul to those duties.

1. To be frequently setting to the duty, as for example of prayer, though that should raise the distemper of their body: for, through time that may weare away, or at least grow lesse; while as their giving way thereto will still make the duty the more and more terrible, and so render themselves the more unfit for it, and thus they shall gratifie Satan, who (it may be) may have a hand in that bodily distemper too: when the poor soul is thus accustomed or habituated to the attempting of the duty, it will at length appeare not so terrible as it did; & so the body may become not so soon altered thereby, as it was.

2. When such an one can do no more, He would keep his love to the duty, and his desires after it, fresh and lively; and would not suffer these quite to die out.

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3. He would be much in the use of frequent ejaculations, and of short supplications darted up to God; for these will not make such an impression on the body, and so will not so occasion the raising and wakening of the bodyly distemper, as more solemn addressees to God in prayer would possibly do.

4. If he cannot go to Christ with confidence, to draw out of Him life and strength, according to his need; yet he may give a look to Him, though it were from a farre: and he may think of Him, and speak of Him frequently: and would narrowly observe every thing, that pointeth Him out, or bringeth any thing of Him to remembrance.

5. Such souls would not give way to despairing thoughts, as if their case were wholly helpelesse and hopelesse: for that is a reflecting upon the power & skill of Christ: and therefore is provoking and dishonourable to Him.

6. Let Christ, and all that is His, be precious & wayes and lovely unto them. And thus they would keep some room in their heart open for Him; all He should be pleased to come to them with salvation. And who can tell, how soon He may come?

But enough of this: there is a *Fourth* case of deadnesse to be spoken to; and that is this.

C H A P. XXIV.

How shall the soul make use of Christ, as the life, which is under the prevailing power of unbelief & infidelity.

THAT we may helpe to give some clearing to a poor soul in this case, we shall

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1. See what are the several steps and degrees of this distemper.

2. Consider what the causes hereof are.

3. Shew how Christ is life to a soul in such a case; and

4. Give some directions, how a soul in that case, should make use of Christ, as *the Life*, to the end, it may be delivered therefrom.

And *first*. There are many several steps to, and degrees of this distemper: we shall mention a few, as

1. When they cannot come with confidence, and draw out of Him by faith, what their souls case calleth for; they cannot with joy draw waters out of the wels of salvation, *Esai. 12: 3*. But keep at a distance, and intertaine jealous thoughts of Him: this is a degree of unbeliefe, making way for more.

2. When they cannot confidently assert, and avow their interest in Him, as the Church did, *Esai. 12: 2*. laying *Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Iehovah is my strength, & my song. He also is become my salvation,*

3. when they much question, if ever they have indeed laid hold on Christ; and so cannot go to Him, for the supply of their wants and necessities.

4. When moreover they question, if they be allowed of God, and warranted to come to Him, and lay hold upon Him: yea and they think they have many arguments, whereby to maintaine this their unbeliefe, and justify their keeping aback from Christ.

5. Or when, if they look to Him at all, it is with much mixture of faithlesse fears that they shall not be the better: or, at least, doubting whether it shall be to their advantage or not.

6. This unbelief will advance further, and they may come to that, not only to conclude, that they have no part or portion in Him, but also to conclude, that their case is desperat and irremediable: and so say, there is no more hope, they are cut off for their part, as *Ezech. 37: 11.* and so lye by as dead and forelorne.

7. Yea they may come higher, and vent some desperat thoughts and expressions of God, to the great scandal of the godly, and to the dishonour of God.

8. And yet more, they may come that length, to question all the promises, and cry out, with *David* in his haste, *Psal. 116: 11.* that *all men are liars.*

9. Yea they may come to this, to account the whole gospel, to be nothing but a heap of delusions, and a cunningly devised fable, or but mere notions and fancies.

10. And at length come to question, if there be a God, that ruleth in the Earth.

These are dreadful degrees and steps of this horrid distemper, and enough to make all flesh tremble.

Let us see *next*, whence this cometh. The causes hereof we may reduce to three heads.

First. The holy Lord hath a holy hand in this; and hath noble ends and designs before Him, in this matter: as

1. The Lord may think good to order matters
thus.

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thus, that He may magnifie his power and grace, in rescuing such, as were returned to the very brinke of hell, and seemed to many to be lost and irrecoverably gone.

2. That in punishing them thus, for giving way to the first motions of unbeliefe, he might warne all to guard against such an evil, and not to foster and give way to groundlesse complaints, nor intertaine objections, moved against their condition by the devil.

3. To warne all to walk circumspectly, and to worke-out their salvation with fear and trembling, not knowing what may befall them, ere they die.

4. To teach all to walk humbly, not knowing what advantage Satan may get of them, ere all be done; and to see their dayly need of Christ to strengthen their faith, and to keep their grips of Him fast.

5. So the Lord may think good to dispense so with some, that he may give a full proof of his wonderfully great patience and longanimity, in bearing with such, and that so long.

6. As also to demonstrate his Sovereignty, in measuring out his dispensations to his own, as he seeth will most glorifie himself.

Next, Satan hath an active hand in this, for

1. He raiseth clouds and mists in the believer, so that he cannot see the work of God within himself, and so is made to cry out, that he hath no grace, and that all was but delusions, and imaginations, which he looked upon as grace before.

2. He raiseth up in them jealousies of God, and of all his wayes, and puts a false glosse and constru-

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tion on all, which God doth, to the end he may confirme them in their jealousies; which they have drunk in of God.

3. Having gained this ground, he worketh then upon their corruption, with very great advantage; and thus driveth them from evil to worse, and not only to question their present interest in Christ, but also to quite all hope for the time to come.

4. This being done, he driveth the soul yet further, and filleth it with prejudices against God & his glorious truths; and from this he can easily bring them to call all in question.

5. Yea he will represent God as an enemy to them; and when this is done, how easie is it with him to put them on desperat courses, and cause them speak wickedly and desperatly of God?

6. And when this is done, he can easily darken the understanding, that the poor soul shall not see the glory of the gospel, and of the covenant of grace, nor the lustre and beauty of holinesse: yea and raise prejudices against the same, because there is no hope of partaking of the benefite thereof: and so bring them on, to a plaine questioning of all, as meer delusions.

7. And when he hath gotten them brought this length, he hath faire advantage to make them question if there be a God, and so drive them forward to Atheisme. And thus deceitfully he can carry the soul from one step to another.

But *thirdly*. There are many sinful causes of this within the man self, as

1. Pride and haughtinesse, of minde, as thinking

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ing their mountain standeth so strong, that it cannot be moved: and this provoketh God to hide his face, as, *Psal. 30.*

2. Selfconfidence, a concomitant of pride, supposing themselves to be so well rooted, that they cannot be shaken, whereas it were better for them to walk in feare.

3. Want of watchfulnesse over a deceitful heart, and an *evil heart of unbelief*, that is still departing from the living God, *Heb. 3: 12.* It is good to be jealous here.

4. Giving way to doubtings and questionings too readily at first. It is not good to tempt the Lord by parlying too much and too readily with Satan. *Eva's* practice might be a warning sufficient to us.

5. Not living in the sight of their wants, and of their dayly necessity of Christ, nor acting faith upon Him dayly, for the supplying of their wants: and when faith is not used, it may contract rust, and be weakned, and come at length not to be discerned.

6. Intertaining of jealous thoughts of God, and harkening too readily to any thing, that foster and increase or confirme these.

7. Not delighting themselves in, and with pleasure dwelling on the thoughts of Christ, of his offices, of the gospel, and promises; so that these come at length to lose their beauty and glory, in the soul, and have not the lustre that once they had; and this doth open a door to much mischief.

8. In a word, not walking with God, accord-

ing

ing to the gospel, provoketh the Lord to give them up to themselves for a time.

We come now to the *Third* particular, which is to show, How Christ is life to the poor soul in this case. And for the clearing of this, consider

1. That Christ is *the author and finisher of faith*, Heb. 12: 2. and so, as He did rebuke unbelief at the first, he can rebuke it againe.

2. That He is the great Prophet, clearing up the gospel, and every thing, that is necessary for us to know, *bringing life and immortality to light by the gospel*, 2 Tim. 1: 11. and so manifesting the lustre and beauty of the gospel.

3. He bringeth the promises home to the soul, in their *reality, excellency, and truth*, being the *faithful witness and the Amen*, Revel. 3: 14. and the confirmer of the promises, so that they are all *yea and Amen in him*, 2 Cor. 1: 20. And this serveth to establish the soul in the faith, and to shew out thoughts of unbelief.

4. So doth He, by his Spirit, dispel the mist & clouds, which Satan, through unbelief, had raised in the soul.

5. And thereby also rebuketh those mistakes of God, and prejudices at Him and his wayes, which Satan hath wrought there, through corruption.

6. He discovereth himself to be a ready help in time of trouble, the hope and anchor of salvation, Heb. 6: 19. and a Priest living for ever to make intercession for poor sinners, Heb. 7: 25.

7. And hereby he cleareth up to the poor soul a possibility of helpe and reliefe; and thus rebuketh dispaire, or preventeth it.

8. He

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8. He manifesteth himself to be the marrow and substance of the gospel: and this maketh every line thereof pleasant and beautiful to the soul, and so freeth them from the prejudices that they had at it.

2. So in manifesting himself in the gospel, he revealeth the Father, that the soul cometh to the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 4: 6. and this saveth the soul from atheisme

10. When the soul cannot gripe Him, nor look to Him, yet He can look to the soul, and by his look quicken and revive the soul, and warme the heart with love to Him, and at length move and incline it sweetly to open to Him. And thus gripe and hold fast a lost sheep, yea and bring it home againe.

But what should a soul do in such a case. To this (which is the *Fourth* particular to be spoken to) I *answere*.

1. They would strive against those evils, formerly mentioned, which procured or occasioned this distemper: a stop should be put to these malignant humors.

2. They would be careful to lay againe the foundation of solide knowledge of God, and of his glorious truths, revealed in the gospel: and labour for the faich of God's truth and veracity: for till this be, nothing can be right in the soul.

3. They would be thoroughly convinced of the treacherie, deceitfulnesse, and wickednesse of their hearts, that they may see it is not worthie to be trusted, and that they may be jealous of it, and not hearken so readily to it, as they have done, especially

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cially seeing Satan can prompt it to speak for his advantage.

4. They would remember also, that it is divine helpe, that can recover them, and cause them gripe to the promises, and lay hold on them of new againe, as well as at the first, and that of themselves, they can do nothing.

5. In using of the meanes for the recovery of life, they would eye Christ, and because this eyeing of Christ is faith, and their disease lyeth most there they would do as the Israelits did, who were stung in the eye with the serpents, they looked to the brazen serpent with the wounded and stung eye: so would they do with a sickly, and almost dead, faith, grip Him, and with an eye, almost put out and made blinde, look to Him, knowing how ready He is to help, and what a tender heart He hath.

6. And to confirme them in this resolution, they would take a new view of all the notable encouragements to beleewe, wherewith the whole gospel aboundeth.

7. And withal, fix on Him, as the only author and finisher of faith.

8. And in a word, They would cast a wonderfully unbeleeving, and atheistical soul on Him, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working, and is wonderful in mercy and grace, and in all his wayes. And thus may He at length, in his own time, and in the way that will most glorify Himself, raise up that poor soul, out of the grave of infidelity, wherein it was stincking; and so prove Him

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Himself to be indeed *the resurrection and the life*, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

We come now to speak to another case, which is

C H A P. XXV.

How Christ is to be made use of, as the life, by one that is so dead and senselesse, as he cannot know what to judge of himself, or his own case, except that it is naught.

WE spoke something to this very case upon the matter, when we spoke of Christ as *the Truth*. Yet we shall speak a little to it here; but shall not enlarge particulars formerly mentioned: and therefore we shall speak a little to those five particulars; and so,

1. Shew, what this distemper is.
2. Shew, whence it proceedeth, and how the soul cometh to fall into it.
3. Shew, how Christ, as the life, bringeth about a recovery out of it.
4. Shew how the soul is to be exercised, that it may obtaine a recovery: and
5. Answer some Questions or Objections.

As to the *first*: Belcevers many times may be so dead, as not only not to see and know, that they have an interest in Christ, and to be uncertaine, what to judge of themselves; but also be so carried away with prejudices and mistakes, as that they will judge no other wayes of themselves, than that their

their case is naught; yea and not only will deny, or mis-call the good, that God hath wrought in them by his Spirit; but also reason themselves to be out of the state of grace, and a stranger to faith and to the workings of the Spirit: and hereupon will come to call all delusions, which some time they had felt, and seen in themselves: which is a sad distemper; and which grace in life would free the soul from.

This proceedeth (which is the *second* particular) partly from God's hiding of his face, and changing his dispensations, about them; and compassing them with clouds; and partly from themselves, and their owne mistakes: as

1. Judging their state, not by the unchangeable rule of truth; but by the outward dispensations of God, which change upon the best.

2. Judging their state by the observable measure of grace within them; and so concluding their state bad, because they observe corruption prevailing now and then, and grace decaying; and they perceive no victory over temptations, nor growth in grace, &c.

3. Judging also their state by others; and so they suppose that they cannot be beleevers, because they are so unlike to others, whom they judge true beleevers. This is also to judge by a wrong rule.

4. Judging themselves by themselves, that is, because they look so unlike to what sometimes they were themselves, they conclude, that their state cannot be good, which is also a wrong rule to judge their State by.

5. Beginning to try and examine their case and

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State, and coming to no close or issue, so that when they have done, they are as unclear and uncertaine, what to judge of themselves, as when they began: or

6. Taking little or no paines to try themselves seriously, as in the sight of God, but resting satisfied with a superficial trial, which can come to no good issue.

7. Trying and examineing, but, through the sight of Satan, and because pitching upon wrong marks, coming to no good issue, but condemning themselves without ground.

8. There is another thing which occasioneth this misjudging, to wit, the want of distinctnesse and clearnesse in covenanting with Christ; and the ignorance of the nature of true saving faith.

As to the *third* particular. How Christ is *Life* to the beleever in this case.

I Answer. Christ manifesteth himself to be life to the soul, in this case.

1. By sending the Spirit of life, that Enlighteneth, Informeth, Perswadeth, and Sealeth.

2. By actuating grace so in the soul, that it manifesteth it self, and evidenceth it self to be there, as the heate and burning of a fire will discover it self, without other tokens.

The *fourth* particular, to wit, how the soul should be exercised, or how it should imploy Christ, for an outgate out of this, hath been abundantly cleared above, where we shewed, that beleevers in this case would

1. Be frequent in griping Christ, and closeing with Him as their allsufficient Mediator: and faith
thus

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thus frequently acting on Him, may discover it self at length.

2. Look to Christ, that hath eye salve, and is given for a witnesse.

3. Keep grips fast of Him, though they be in the dark, and walk on, griping to Him.

4. Keep love towards Him and his working, and in exercise.

5. Beg of Him to cleare up their state by his Spirit, explaining the true marks of grace, and discovering the working of grace in the soul.

But it will be said (and so I come to the last particular) what if after all this, I remaine as formerly, as unable to judge aright of my State, as ever?

Ans. Yet, thou would continue griping Christ, loving Him, looking to Him, casting a lost dead soul, with all thy wants, upon Him, and minde this as thy constant work. Yea, thou would labour to be growing in these direct acts of faith: and learne to submit to God herein, knowing that those reflect acts are not absolutely necessary, and that thou should think it much, if He bring thee to heaven at length, though covered with a cloud, all thy dayes.

Obj. 2. But others get much more clearenesse?

Ans. I grant that: yet know, that every one getteth not clearenesse, and such as have it, have it not in the same measure: and must God give thee as much as He giveth to any other? What if thou could not make that use of it, that others do, but wax proud thereby, and forget thy self? Therefore, it will be best to give God liberty to dispense

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his favours, as He will, and that thou be about thy commanded duty, the exercise of faith, Love, feare, Patience, &c.

Obj. 3. But if at any time I got a sight of my case, it would be some peace and satisfaction to me?

Ans. I grant that, & what knowest thou, but thou may also get that favour ere thou die? Why then will thou not waite his leasure?

Obj. 4. But the want of it in the mean time maketh me go heartlesly and discouragedly about my commanded duties, and maketh that I cannot apply things distinctly to my self.

Ans. Yet the word of command is the same, the offer is the same, and the encouragement is the same: why then should not thou be going on, leaning to Christ in the wilderness, even though thou want that comfortable sight?

Obj. 5. But it is one thing to want a cleare sight of my state, it is another thing to judge my self, to be yet in the state of nature: and this is my case.

Ans. I grant this is the worst of the two: yet, what if thou misjudge thy self without ground? Should thou not suffer for thine own folly? and whom can thou blame but thy self? And if thou judge so, thou cannot but know, that it is thy duty to do the thing, that thou supposeth is not yet done, that is, run away to Christ for life and salvation, and rest on Him, and abide there: and if this were frequently renewed, the grounds of thy former mistake might be easily removed.

Yet further, I would adde those few things.

1. Take

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1. Take no pleasure in debating against your own soul; for that is but to serve Satans designe.

2. Be not too rash or ready to drink in prejudices against the work of God, in your own souls; for that is to collude with Sathan against your selves.

3. Make much of any little light He is pleased to give, were it but of one mark; and be not ill to please: for one scriptural mark, as love to the brethren, may sufficiently evidence the thing.

4. See how thy soul would like the condition of such as are carnal, profane, carelesse in the matters of God; and if thy soul doth really abhorre that, and thou would not upon any account choose to be in such a case, thou may gather something from that, to thy comfort: But enough of this case here.

CHAP. XXVI.

How is Christ as the Life to be applyed by a soul, that misseth God's favour and countenance.

THe first case, that we shall speak a little to, is a deadnesse, occasioned by the Lord's hiding of himself, who is their Life, and the fountaine of life, Psal. 36: 9. and whose loving kindnesse is better then life, Psal. 63: 3. and in whose favour is their life, Psal. 30: 5. A case, which the frequent complaints of the Saints manifest to be rife enough. Concerning which we shall,

1. Shew some of the consequences of the Lord's hiding

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hideing of his face, whereby the souls case will appeare.

2. Shew the reasons of this dispensation.

3. Shew how Christ is life to the soul in this case, and

4. Point out the souls duty; or how he is to make use of Christ, for a recovery.

As to the first, we may take notice of those particulars,

1. They complaine of God's hideing of himself, and forsakeing them, *Psal. 22: 1. my God my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* and *Psal. 13: 3. how long wilt thou forsake me?* &c.

2. They cry out for a blaink of his face, and get not: for He hath withdrawn himself, *Psal. 13: 3. How long wilt thou hide thy face from me.* *Heman Psal. 88.* cryed out night and day, but yet God's face was hid *vers. 1: 9, 14.* The spouse seeketh long, *Cant. 5.* See *Psal. 22: 1, 2.*

3. They are looking for an outgate, but get none? And hope deferred maketh their hearts sick, *Prov. 13: 12.*

4. They are in the dark, and cannot tell, why the Lord dispenseth so toward them: why (said *Heman Psal. 88: 14.*) *castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?* They cannot understand wherefore it is. So *Iob* cryed out, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me, Iob 19: 2.*

5. They may also be walking, in the meane while, without light or counsel, so as they shall not know what to do. *How long shall I take counsel in my soul?* *Psal. 13: 3.*

6. Moreover they may have their heart filled with

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with sorrow; as we see, Psal. 13:2. *having sorrow in my heart*, said David. He also sayeth, Ps. 38: that his sorrow was continually before him, vers. 17. and Psal. 116: 3. *I found trouble and sorrow.*

7. They may be so, as that the sweet experiences of others, may yield them no supply of comfort, at present, Psal. 22: 4, 5, 6. *Our Fathers trusted in thee* (said David) *and thou didst deliver them. They cryed unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.* But that gave him no present ease or comfort: for immediately he addeth, vers. 6. *But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men &c.*

8. Yea all their own former experiences may yield them little solace: as we see in the same place, Psal. 22: 9, 10. compared with, vers. 14: 15. *Thou art He* (sayes he vers. 9) *that took me out of the womb, &c.* and yet he complaines, vers. 14 that he was poured out like water, and his bones end of joynt, that his heart was melted in the midst of his bowels &c.

9. They may be brought neare to a giving over all in despondency; and be brought, in their sense, to the very dust of death, Psal. 22: 16.

If it be enquired, why the Lord dispenseth so with his own people?

We answer, (and this is the Second particular) That he doth it for holy and wise reasons, whereof we may name a few, as

1. To punish their carelesse and negligence, as we see he did with the Spouse, Cant. 5.

2. To chastise them for their illampting of his favour and kindness, when they had as the same passage evidenceth.

3. To

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3. To check them for their security and carnal confidence, as He did *David Psal. 30: 6, 7.* when he said his mountaine stood strong, and he should never be moved; then did the Lord hide his face, and he was troubled.

4. To try if their obedience to his commands be pure and conscientious, and not in a sort mercenary, because of his lifting up upon them the light of his countenance; and to see if conscience to a command driveth them to duty; when they are in the dark, and have no encouragement.

5. To put the graces of the Spirit to tryal, and to exercise; as their Faith, Patience, Hope, Love &c. *Psal. 13: 5, 6. & 22: 24.*

6. To awaken them from their security, and to set them to a more diligent following of duty: as we see in the Spouse, *Cant. 5.*

7. To sharpen their desire and hunger after Him, as that same instance cleareth.

Even in such a case as this, Christ is life to the soule, (which is the *Third* particular)

1. By taking away the sinful causes of such a distance, having laid down his life, and shed his blood: for the remission of their sins; so that such a dispensation is not flowing from pure wrath; but is rather an act of mercy and love.

2. By advocating the poor sinners cause in heaven, where he His making Intercession for His own, and thereby obtaining a delivery from that condition, in God's own time, even the shining againe of his countenance upon them.

3. By keeping life in, as to habitual graces, and by breathing thereupon; so that it becometh
Q lively

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lively and operative, even in such a winter day.

4. By supporting the soul under that dispensation, and keeping it from fainting, through the secret influences of grace, which He conveyeth into the soul: as He did to the poor woman of Canaan, *Math. 15.*

5. By setting the soul a work, to use such means, as God hath appointed for a recovery; as to cry, to plead, to longe, to waite, &c. *Their hearts shall live that seek Him.*

6. By teaching the soul to submit to, and acquiesce in what God doth; acknowledging his Righteousnesse, Greatnesse and Sovereignty: and this quietnesse of heart is its life.

7. By keeping the heart fast to the covenant of grace. So that, whatever come they will never quite that bargain, but they will trust in Him, though He should kill them; and they will adhere to the covenant of grace, though they should be dragged through hell.

8. At length, when He seeth it fit and convenient, He quickeneth, by drawing-by the vaille, and filling the soul with joy, in the light of God's countenance; and causing it to sing, as having the heart lifted up in the wayes of the Lord.

As to the *last* particular, concerning the duty of a soul in such a case, we say

1. He would humble himself under this dispensation, knowing that it is the great God with whom he hath to do; and that there is no contending with Him: and that all flesh should stoop before Him.

2. He would justify God in all that He doth; and

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and say with David *Psal. 22: 3.* But thou art holy,
O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

3. He would look upon himself as unworthy of
the least favour of that kinde: *I am a worme* (said
David *Psal. 22: 6.*) *and no man.*

4. He would search-out his provocations, and
run away to the fountain, the blood of Christ; that
these may be purged away. and his conscience
sprinkled from dead works, and his soul washen in
the fountain opened to the house of David, for sin
and for uncleannesse.

5. He must also imploy Christ, to discover to
him more and more of his guiltinesse, whereby he
had grieved the Spirit of God; and as sins are dis-
covered to him, he would repent of them, and
run away with them to the blood, that cleanseth
from all sin. This was *Elihu's* advice to *Iob*.
Cap. 34: vers. 31, 32. Surely it is meet to be said
unto God, *I have borne chastisement, I will not of-
fend. That which I see not, teach thou me, if I
have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

6. He would grip to Christ in the Covenant,
and rest there, with joy and satisfaction: he would
hold that fast, that he may ride out the storme in a
darke night. Though he make not mine house to
grow, said David, *2 Sam. 23: vers. 5.* Yet this
was all his salvation and all his desire, that He
had made with him an everlasting Covenant, or-
dered in all things and sure. The Spouse took this
course, when she could not get a sight of Him,
whom her soul loved, *Cant. 6: vers. 3.* and asser-
ed her interest in Him. *I am my beloveds, and my
beloved is mine.*

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7. He would be in certaining high, and loving thoughts of God, commending Him highly, let His dispensations be what they will. So did the Spouse, *Cant. 5: vers. 10 - 16.*

8. He would earnestly seek after Him. The Spouse did so, *Cant. 5: vers. 6.* the discouragement she met with at the hands of the watch men did not put her off her pursuite, *Vers. 7.* but she continued, *yea was sick of love, Vers. 8.* and here looks had a prevailing power with him, as we see, *Cant. 6: vers. 5.* where the Bridgroom uttered that most astonishing word, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.*

9. This new manifestation, which he is seeking for, must be expected in and through Jesus; who is the true Tabernacle, and he who was represented by the Mercy-seat. He is the only trying place, in Him alone will the Father be seen

10. He would also look to Him, for strength and support, in the meane time; and for grace, that he may be kept from fainting, and may be helped to waite, til he come, who knoweth the fittest season, wherein to appeare.

But, it will be said, what if after all this, we get no outgate, but He hideth his face still from us?

I answer, Such would know, that life is one thing, and comfort is another thing: Grace is one thing, and warme blinks of Gods face is another. The one is necessary to the very being of a Christian, the other not; but only necessary to his comfortable being: and therefore they should be content, if God give them grace, though they misse comfort for a time.

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2. They would learne to commit that matter to Christ, who knoweth how to give that which is good; and what is best for them.

3. They would be hanging on Him, for strength for duty; and, in his strength, setting about every commanded duty, and be exercising, Faith, Love, Patience, Hope, Desire, &c.

4. Let the well ordered covenant be all their salvation, and all their desire; and though they should not get a comfortable blaink of God's face, so long as they were here, yet holding fast this covenant they should at length be saved souls, and what would they have more? and when they get this, what will they misse?

CHAP. XXVII.

How shall one make use of Christ, as the Life,

when wrestling with an angry God

because of sin

THAT we may give some satisfaction to this question, we shall

1. Shew what are the ingredients in this case, or what useth to concur in this distemper.

2. Shew some reasons, why the Lord is pleased to dispense thus with his people.

3. Shew how Christ is life to the soul in this case.

4. Shew the believers duty for a recovery: and

5. Adde a word or two of caution.

As to the first. There may be those parts of, or ingredients in this distemper,

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1. God presenting their sins unto their view, so as they shall cry out, *our sin is ever before us*, Psal. 51: 3. and say, as it is Psal. 90: 8. *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance*: and so cause them see the Lord contending for sin, as the Church did, Esai. 59: *we roare all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment but there is none, for salvation but it is far off from us: for our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us, and as for our iniquities, we know them, &c.*

2. Yea, God may bring upon them the iniquities of their youth, as Job speaketh Cap. 13: 26. and so bring upon them, or suffer conscience to charge them with their old sins, formerly repented of and pardoned. And this is more terrible: David is made to remember his original sin, Psal. 51.

3. And, as Job speaketh, Cap. 15: 17. God may seem to be sealing up all their sins in a bag, that none of them may be lost or fall by, without being taken notice of; and, as it were, be gathering them together in a heape.

4. He may pursue sore with signes of wrath & displeasure, because of those sinnes, as we see in David Psal. 4. & 38. & 51. and in several others of his people, chastened of the Lord because of their transgressions; whereof there are many instances in scripture.

5. Yea, and that for a considerable time together, and cause them cry out, with David Psal.

4: 3. — *but thou O Lord how long!*

6. And that not only with outward, but also with

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with inward plagues. And strokes, as *David's* case cleareth, in the forecited *Psalmes*.

7. Yea and not only themselves, but even their posterity: as *David's* childe was smiten with death, and the posterity of *Manasses*, who found mercy himself, 2 *Chron.* 33: 13. was caryed into captivity for his sin, 2 *Kings* 23: 26, 27.

8. Further, the Lord may deprive them of all their former joy and comfort, which made *David* cry out *Psal.* 51: 12. *restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and grant me thy free Spirit.*

9. And, which is yet more terrible, write their sin upon their judgment, as when He caused the sword and whoredom follow *David's* house.

10. And finally, He may cause them feare utter offcasting as *Psal.* 51: 11. *cast me not away (said he) from thy presence.*

And this the Lord thinketh good to do (that we may speak a word to the second particular) for those and the like reasons.

1. To discover to them, and to all the world, how Just, Holy, and Righteous a God He is, that cannot approve of or beare with sin, even in his own children.

2. To make all fear and tremble before this great and holy God, who is terrible in his judgements, even when they come from a Fathers hand, that is not pursuing in pure anger and wrath, but chastening in love: Sure, all must think, that his dispensations with the wicked will be much more fearful and horrible, seing they are not yet reconciled unto Him through the blood of *Iesus*.

3. To presse Believers more earnestly in to Christ, that

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that they may get a new extract of their pardon; and their souls washen in the blood of Iesus.

4. To teach them to walk more circumspectly afterward, and to guard more watchfully against Satans temptations, and to imploy Christ more as their Strength, Light and Guide.

5. To cause them see their great obligation to Iesus Christ, for delivering them from that state of wrath, wherein they were by nature, as well as others, and would have lyen in to all eternity, had not He redeemed them.

6. To exercise their Faith, Patience and Hope; to see if in hope, they will beleve against hope, and lay hold on the strength of the Lord, that they may make peace with him, *Esai. 27: 5.*

7. To give a fresh proof of his wonderful Mercy, Grace, Love, and Compassion, upholding the soul, in the meane time, & at length, pardoning them, and speaking peace to their souls through the blood of Iesus.

But as to the *third* particular. We may look on Christ, as *the Life* to the soul in this case, upon those accounts.

1. He hath satisfied justice; and so hath borne the pure wrath of God due for their finnes: He hath troden the winepresse alone, *Esai. 63: 3.* He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our sins, *Esai. 53: 5, 10.* And therefore they drink not of this cup, which would make them drunk, and to stagger, and fall, and never rise againe.

2. Yea, He hath procured, that mercy and love shall accompany all those sharpe dispensations; and that they shall flow from mercy; yea and that they

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they shall be as a covenanted blessing, promised in the covenant, *Psal. 89:30, 31, 32, 33.*

3. And sometimes He is pleased to let them see this clear difference betwixt the strokes they lye under, and the judgments of pure wrath, which attend the wicked: and this supporteth the soul: for then he seeth, that those dispensations, how sharpe so ever they be, shall work together for good to him; and come from the hand of a gracious and loving Father, reconciled in the blood of Christ.

4. He is a Prince exalted to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel, *Act. 5:31.* Yea, He hath procured such a clause in the covenant, which is wel ordered in all things and sure, that upon their renewing of faith and repentance, their after sins shall be pardoned; and besides the promises of faith and repentance, in the covenant, His being Prince exalted to give both, giveth assurance of their receiving of both.

5. He cleareth to them their interest in the Covenant, and their right to the promises of the Covenant, and through their closing with Christ, by faith, He raiseth up their heart in hope, & causeth them to expect an outgate, even remission of their sins, and turning away of the displeasure in due time through Him: and this is a great part of their life.

6. Being the author and finisher of faith, and a Prince to give repentance, He, by His Spirit, worketh up the soul to a renewing of its grips of Himself, by faith, and to a running to the death and blood of Christ for pardon, and washing: and worketh godly sorrow in the heart; whereupon followeth

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loweth Pardon, according to the gospel constitution, though the beleever as yet perceiveth it not. And sin being pardoned before God, conform to the tenor of the covenant of grace, the man is a living man, whatever feares of death, he may be kept under for a time.

7. He helpeth also the soul to a justifying of God, and to a holy submissive frame of Spirit, under that dispensation; so that they are willing to beare the indignation of the Lord, because they have sinned against Him, *Micah. 7: 9.* and to waite for an outgate in God's own time; and to kisse the rod, and accept of the punishment of their sin.

8. When He seeth it fit for his own glory, and their advantage, He speaketh peace at length to the soul, and sayeth, *Son or daughter, be of good cheer, thy sinnes are forgiven thee.* And then is the soul restored to life.

As to the *fourth* particular. The soul that is wraстling with an angry God for sin, and would make use of Christ as *the life*, would do those things,

1. He would look to Christ, as standing under God's curse in our room, and as satisfying justice for all the elect, and for all their sinnes.

2. He would eye the covenant, wherein new pardon is promised, upon the renewing of faith and repentance.

3. He would eye Christ, as the great Lord dispenser of both Faith and Repentance, and hing on Him for both; and thus beleve, that he may beleve and repent, or lay his soul open to Him, that He may work in him both Repentance and Faith.

4. He

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4. He would flee to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than the blood of *Abel*, that he may be washen, and sprinkled with hysope, as *David* did *Psal. 51: 7*.

5. He would eye Christ as a prince, to pardon, and give remission of sins, and as exalted for this end, and would fix his eye upon Him, as now exalted in glory for this end.

6. He would close with Christ of new, as his only al sufficient mediator; and, having done this, and repented of his sins, whereby God hath been provoked, he would conclude through faith, that a pardon is past in the court of heaven, conform to the tenor of the gospel, and waite on Christ, until the intimation come.

As for the cautions, which I promised to speak to, in the *last* place, take those few

1. Do not conclude there is no pardon, because there is no intimation thereof made to thy soul, as yet. According to the dispensation of grace, condescended upon in the gospel, pardon is had immediately upon a souls beleeving and repenting; But the intimation, sense, and feeling of pardon, is a distinct thing, and may, for several ends, be long kepted-up from the soul; Sure, they go not always together.

2. Do not conclude, there is no pardon, because the rode, that was inflicted for sin, is not as yet taken off. God pardoned *David's* sin, and did estimate the same to Him by *Nathan*, and yet the sword did not depart from his house till he died: God can forgive, and yet take vengeance on their iniquities, *Psal. 99: 8*.

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3. Do not upon this ground, question God's Faithfulnesse, or conclude that God's covenant doth not stand fast: He is the same, and the covenant abideth fast and firme; but the change is in thee.

4. Do not think, that because thou hast once received Christ, that therefore, without any new act of faith on Him, or of repentance towards God, thou should immediately be pardoned of thy sinnes, as soon as they are committed: for the gospel methode must be followed, and it should satisfie us.

C H A P. XXVIII.

No man cometh to the Father but by me.

THis being added for further confirmation of what was formerly said, will point out unto us several necessary truthes: as

First. That it is most necessary, to be sound and cleare in this fundamental point, of coming to God, only in and through Christ: for

1. It is the whole marrow of the gospel.

2. It is the hinge of all our salvation, Christ is the chiefe cornerstone, *Esa. 28: 16.* *1 Pet. 1: 5, 6.* and

3. The only ground of all our solide and true peace and comfort.

4. An errour, or a mistake here, is most dangerous, hazarding, if not ruineing, all

5. Satan endeavours mainly against this, raiseth
up

up heresies, errors and false opinions, and prompt-
eth some to vent perplexing doubts and objections,
& all to darken this cardinal point. So doth he muster
up all his temptations for this end, at length, to
keep poor souls from acquaintance with this way,
and from making use of it, or entering into it.

6. Our corrupt hearts are most averse from it,
and will close with any way, how troublesome,
how expensive and costly so ever it may seem to be,
rather than with this.

7. There are a multitude of false wayes, as we
did shew above.

All which cleare up this necessity, and should
teach us to be very diligent to win to acquaintance
with it; and to make sure that we are in it, and to
hold it fast, and to keep it pure in our practise, with-
out mixing any thing with it, or corrupting of it.

Secondly. That it is no small difficulty to get
this truth beleaved and practised, that through
Christ alone we come to the Father. Therefore is
the same thing asserted and inculcated againe, upon
the matter: for

1. Nature will not reach this way, it is far
above nature.

2. Yea our natural inclination is much against it,
opposing it, and fighting against it.

3. This way is altogether contrary to that high
esteem, which naturally all of us have of ourselves.

4. And is opposite to that pride of heart, which
naturally we are subject to.

5. Yea there is nothing in us by natur, that
will willingly comply with this way: but, on the
contrary, all is opposite thereunto.

6. And

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6. And therefore it is the Christians first lesson, to deny himself.

The consideration of which should humble us; and make us very jealous of our own hearts and inclinations, and of all those courses, which they are inclineable to, and bent upon. And it should put us to try, if ever we have overcome this difficulty; and have now all our hopes and comforts founded on Him, and on nothing else: and are up or down in our peace and joy, according as we win - in to Him, or are shut out from Him: and in all our approaches to God, upon whatsoever account, are leaning to Him and resting on Him alone, expecting access, acceptance, and a hearing, only in Him; and are quieted under all our feares and temptations with this, that Christ is our way to the Father.

Thirdly. That even beleevers have need to have this truth inculcated often: for

1. Satan is busie pulling them off this ground, by all the wiles and temptations he can.

2. Their own corruption within, and the evil heart of unbeliefe, is alwayes opposing this way, and drawing them off it.

3. Through the slight of Satan, and the power of corruption, they are oftentimes declining from this pure gospel way.

4. The experience of beleevers can tell, that when they are at their best, it is a great work and exercise to them, to keep their heart right in this matter.

5. Is it not too oft seen, that they are under the spiritual plague of formality, which stealeth them off their feet here?

6. And

6. And is it not found oftentimes, that they are too too ready to leane to some thing beside Christ?

How ought all to be convinced of this, and humbled under the sense of it? And see also how necessary it is to be oft preaching on this subject, and to be oft thinking upon and studying this fundamental truth.

Fourthly. It should be a strong motive and incitement to us to make use of Christ, as the way to the Father, That no man cometh to the Father but by Him: for this may be looked upon as an argument, enforcing their usemaking of Him, as the way.

Fifthly. It discovereth the ground of that truth, that there are but few that are saved; for none cometh to the Father but by Him: few, in respect of the whole world, once heare of Him; and of such as hear of Him, few have the true way of imploying and applying him, as the way to the Father, cleared up unto them: and againe. of such as have the truth, as it is in Jesus, preached unto them, O how few go to Him, and make use of Him according to the truth, and beleeeve and practise the truth?

Sixtly. That in and through Christ alone we must come.

1. To the Knowledge of the Father: for no man knoweth the Father but the son: and He alone, who came out of the bosome of the Father, revealeth Him.

2. To the Favour and Friendship of the Father: for He alone is our peace, and in Him alone is the Father well pleased.

4. To the Kingdome of the Father here; for He only,

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only is the door, *Iohn. 10.* and by his Spirit are we effectually called.

4. To the Kingdome of the Father above: for He alone hath opened that door, and is entered into the holiest of all, as our forerunner, and is gone to prepare a place for us.

5. Through Him alone must we addressse ourselves to the Father, in our supplications, *Iohn. 16: 23. Revel. 8: 3.* in our thanksgivings *Rom. 1: 8; Col. 3: 17.* and praise *Heb. 13: 15. Ephes. 3: 21.*

6. Through Him alone have we accessse, and an open door to the Father, *Ephes. 2: 18. & 3: 21. Heb. 4: 16.*

I shall only speak to one case here. viz.

C H A P. XXIX.

*How should we make use of Christ, in going to the Father, in prayer and other
pieces of worship?*

IN short, for answering of this question, I shall lay down those particulars.

1. There would be a lively sense of the infinite distance, that is betwixt the great God, and us finite creaturs; and yet more betwixt the holy God and us sinful wretches.

2. There would be an eyeing of Christ, as the great peacemaker through his death and merites, having satisfied justice, and reconciled sinners unto God; that so we may look on God now, no more

as an enemy, but as reconciled in Jesus.

3. There would be, sometimes at least, a more formal, and explicate actual closing with Christ as ours, when we are going about such duties; and alwayes an implicate and virtual embracing of Him as our mediator; or an habitual hanging upon Him, and leaning to Him as our mediator, and Peacemaker.

4. There would be an eyeing of Him as our great Highpriest, now living for ever to make intercession for us, and to keep the door of heaven open to us: upon which account the Apostle presseth the *Hebrewes* to come boldly to the throne of grace, *Heb. 4: 14, 16*. See also *Heb. 7: 24, 25*.

5. There would be a griping to Him, even in reference to that particular act of worship, and a laying hold upon Him, to speak so, as our Master usher, to bring us by the hand into the Father, as conscious of our own unworthinesse.

6. There would be a confident leaning to Him, in our approaching; and so we would approach in Him, without fear or diffidence. And that notwithstanding that we finde not our souls in such a good frame, as we would wish, yea and guile looking us in the face.

7. Thus would we roll all the difficulties, that come in our way, and all the discouragements, which we meet with, on Him, that He may take away the one and the other, and helpe us over the one and the other.

8. As we would take an answer to all objections from Him alone, and put Him to remove all scruples, and difficulties, and strengthen ourselves against

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against all impediments and discouragements, alone, in and through Him; so there would be the bringing of all our positive encouragements from Him alone, and all our hopes of coming speed with the Father should be grounded upon Him.

9. We would expect all our welcome and acceptance with the Father, only in & through Christ, and expect nothing for any thing in ourselves, nor for our graces, good frame, preparation, or any thing of that kinde. So we would not found our acceptance, nor our peace and satisfaction, on ourselves, nor on any thing we have, or do; nor would we conclude our exclusion or want of acceptance, because we do not apprehend our frame so good as it ought to be; so we should not found our acceptance on our right performance of duties, for that is not Christ.

10. We would quiet ourselves on Him alone, in all our approaches, whatever liveness we finde, or misse in the duty: we are too much tickled and faine, when duties go well with us, and troubled upon the other hand, when it is not so; and the ground of all this, is, because we leane too much to our own duties, and do not quiet ourselfs on Him alone; and hence it is, that we are oft quieted when we get the duty done and put by, though we have not met with Him there, nor gotten use made of Him, as was necessary. All our comfort, peace and quiet would be founded on Him alone.

11. We would look to Him for the removal of all the discouragements, that Satan casts in our way, while we are about this or that piece of worship, to put us back, or to cause us advance slowly

ly and faintingly: and, casting them all on Him, goe forward in our duty.

12. We would look for all our returns and answers only in and through Him, and lay all the weight of our hopes and expectation of a good answer only on Him, 1 John. 5:13, 14, 15.

For Caution I would adde a word or two.

1. I do not think, that the beleever can explicitly and distinctly act all these things, when ever he is going to God; or can distinctly perceive all these several acts: nor have I specified them, and particularly mentioned them thus, for this end, but to shew at some length, how Christ is to be employed in those acts of worship, which we are called to performe; and that because, we oftentimes think the simple nameing of Him, and asking of things for His sake, is sufficient, though our hearts lean more to some other thing, than to Him; and the conscientious christian will find his soul, when he is rightly going about the duties of worship, looking towards Christ thus, sometimes more distinctly and explicitly as to one particular, & sometimes more as to another.

2. Though the beleever cannot distinctly act faith on Christ, all these wayes, when he is going about commanded duties of worship; yet he would be sure to have his heart going out after Christ, as the only ground of his approaching to, and acceptance with, and of being heard by the Father; and to have his heart in such an habitual frame of resting on Christ, that really there may be a relying upon Him, all these wayes, though not distinctly discerned.

3. Some-

3. Sometimes the beleever will be called to be more distinct and explicate in looking to, and resting upon Christ, as to one particular, and sometimes more as to another: when Satan is dissuading him to go to God, because He is an infinite holy one, and he himself is but a sinner: then he is called to act faith on Christ as the mediator, making reconciliation betwixt God and sinners: and when Satan is dissuading from approaching to God, because of their want of an interest in God: then should they act faith on Christ, and embrace him, according to the gospel, and rest there, and so approach. And when Satan casts up his unworthinesse and former sins, to keep him aback, or to discourag him, then he is called to lay hold on Christ, as the great Highpriest, and advocate, and, casting that discouragement on Him, to go forward. So likewise when Satan is discouraging him in his duty, by bringing before him his sin, he should take this course. And when, because of his sinful way of worshiping God, and calling upon him, and other things, he is made to feare, that all is in vaine, that neither God regardeth him, nor his service, and that he shall not come speed, then should he cast all the burden of his acceptance, and of obtaining what he asketh and desireth, on Christ, and quiet himself there: and so as to the rest: and hence appeareth the usefulnesse of our branching-out of this matter.

4. In all this, there must be an acting in the strength of Jesus: a looking to Christ and resting upon Christ, according to the present case and necessity, in Christ; that is, by his strength and grace.

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communicated to us by his Spirit. Then do we worshiþe God in the Spirit, and in the newnesse of the Spirit, when all is done in the matter of worshiþ; in and through Jesus.

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